BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Tetsui Watanabe

Tetsui Watanabe, the second of three children, was born in 1914 to Shichiro and Tei Watanabe in Urausu-*mura*, Kabato-*gun*, Hokkaido, Japan, where Shichiro began his teaching career.

When his father accepted a position at a Japanese-language school in Laupāhoehoe, Hawai‘i, Tetsui Watanabe and mother joined him in the islands in 1918. Within a year or two, when another teaching position became available, the family moved from Laupāhoehoe to Kaiwiki, Hawai‘i where brother, Saburo, was born.

In 1921, the family moved to Waikīkī on the island of O‘ahu where the Watanabes—Shichiro as Japanese-language school teacher-principal and Tei as teacher—served the community.

Tetsui Watanabe grew up in Waikīkī. He attended Waikīkī Elementary, Washington Intermediate, and McKinley High Schools. He also attended Waikīkī Japanese-language School.

Following high school graduation in 1931, he enrolled at the University of Hawai‘i and later, the University of Chicago where he received a bachelor’s degree. He received his medical degree from Rush Medical College in 1938. After completing his residency in Chicago, he returned to Honolulu in 1941. With no openings in radiology, he soon sought and accepted a position in Los Angeles.

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Tetsui Watanabe was turned away when he tried to enlist in the U.S. military. Like other Japanese Americans on the West Coast, he was sent to an assembly center—Tulare, which he helped set up. Later, he was sent to Tule Lake War Relocation Center. At both camps, he worked in the medical facilities. At Tule Lake he married Alice Mitsuyo Oka.

In April 1943, under the sponsorship of Dr. Paul Hodges, the Watanabes were released. They first went to Chicago; then Ann Arbor, Michigan; and finally Joliet and Frankfort, Illinois, before returning to Hawai‘i.

Alice Watanabe and two children returned in 1946. Tetsui Watanabe returned in 1947.

That same year, he opened his private practice in radiology.

Retired since 1978, he is the father of five children, grandfather of twelve.

Tape Nos. 55-31-1-10 and 55-32-1-10

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Tetsui Watanabe (TW)

Honolulu, Hawai‘i

March 12, 2010

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN) and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

WN: [This is an interview with Tetsui] Watanabe on March 12, 2010. The interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto.

Dr. Watanabe, today we're going to start by having you talk about your early life, . . .

TW: Yes.

WN: . . . you know, maybe what you remember about Japan before coming to Hawai‘i and then living in Laupāhoehoe and Kaiwiki. And then, we'll get you to Waikīkī and talk about your education, okay?

TW: Can I look at some notes?

WN: Sure. You mean this?

TW: Yes.

WN: Sure. I don't think you're going to need it, but. (Chuckles)

TW: Oh.

WN: Can you tell us, Dr. Watanabe, can you tell us first when you were born?

TW: I was born 1914, in Japan, in a little hamlet called Urausu-*mura,* Kabato-*gun* near Sapporo, Hokkaido.

WN: And what were your parents doing in Hokkaido?

TW: Well, my father [Shichiro Watanabe] graduated from—what would you say—a teachers' college, in Sapporo. And the first assignment he had was at this little town called Urausu. In fact, I was born in a log cabin (chuckles) when my mother [Tei Watanabe] was called to Urausu, and that was where I was born.

WN: And what number child were you?

TW: I was number two. The first one died in infancy right after birth—caught a cold. So, I'm number two, but actually, the first surviving one.

WN: And, your father is originally from what part of Japan?

TW: He is from Fukushima, from Kitakata, Aizu-Wakamatsu—that's in northern Fukushima.

WN: And where is your mother from?

TW: My mother, also, is from Wakamatsu in Higashiyama Onsen. From what I hear, they used to have a junior high school where they went to, and my father chased her over to Wakamatsu from Kitakata. Now, that's a distance of about, oh, I'd say fifteen miles. He used to chase after her. (WN chuckles.) Finally, he proposed and they agreed that they should go to get married. But right after that, he went to, as I say, Sapporo, where he attended the teachers' college in Sapporo. Then his assignment was in Urausu.

WN: Tell us about your father, Shichiro Watanabe, about his background.

TW: As I said, from then, he was called from Urausu, Japan, by a friend that had became a minister—Buddhist priest. And he was teaching in Laupāhoehoe [Hawai'i] in a school there. He had a temple there, and he called my father to help him in the school.

WN: This was in 1918?

TW: Nineteen eighteen, that's right.

WN: That's when he came from Fukushima to Laupāhoehoe.

TW: He came first, then he called us, my mother and I. So we came in October, sometime, yeah.

WN: Well before we get to that, what kind of education did your father have?

TW: He went, as I said, he went through the grade school, high school, and then went to normal school in Sapporo.

MK: You know, your father is known as a noted educator and a writer, and I've always been wondering, what kind of family background did he come from, like his own father or grandfather?

TW: Yes. As I recollect, his father was an educator, back way back when. And he, I guess, wanted his son to go into education in school. So he probably was influential in getting him into the education field.

MK: And your mother's family, what kind of background did they come from?

TW: Now, that's a different kind of a background. They owned a candy shop in Higashiyama Onsen. It's a real resort town, and they had hot springs there. And they had a candy store. The father used to be the mayor of that little town, at one time, my mother's father. The thing is, his first wife was an Ono family that was fairly well-to-do. But he divorced her and married his second wife—now I forgot the name. Anyway, my grandfather's second wife took over the candy store. Now, they had three children—no, in fact, four girls. So my mother, Tei, was with her, the youngest girl, went to the Ono side, the first wife. And the rest, the other two, stayed with the second wife. So I mean, there was a separation at that time, but later on, she went back to the *onsen*, the candy-shop side. (From Carolyn Adler, daughter of Tetsui and Alice Watanabe: According to my mom, my dad's mother's father had four girls. He sent his first wife home because he wanted a son. His first wife went home to her family and took the two youngest girls. One of the girls who went

with her mom was my dad's mother, Tei. My mom said in those days, one just sent a wife home to her family; no such thing as divorce like we know of today.)

MK: You know, when your father was asked by his friend to come to Hawai'i, and he made the decision to come to Hawai'i, what was the family's reaction?

TW: Well, I don't know. In those days, of course, the man had the, well, you know, prerogative to say or do whatever he wanted to. The wife had to follow. And that's what happened. So, in Laupāhoehoe—after a while, though—there was an opening in a Japanese[-language] school in Kaiwiki, just north of Hilo. And that's where my younger brother was born, in Kaiwiki.

WN: So when you moved to Kaiwiki from Laupāhoehoe, how old were you?

TW: About five years old.

WN: Five? Okay. Well, tell us about growing up in Kaiwiki. What was that like?

TW: Well, I don't remember too much, except one of the things that I remember was, when I was naughty, the school [Laupāhoehoe School] had a closet way in the back of the school, and I was put in the closet. I used to cry, and the people, the neighborhood, would hear me cry, and they'd come and find out. Then, for instance, when my younger brother was born, one of the things is there were Portuguese families around that area, and came to see the newborn—you know, to see. This boy came and said, "Oh, what's his name?"

I said, "Oh, Saburo."

"Oh, Saburo? That's too hard. It's Shabo. Shabo would be easier." So that's his nickname. We all call him "Shabo" from then on, instead of Saburo. (Chuckles)

WN: I know you were really young when you were in Kaiwiki.

TW: Yes, at five years old.

WN: At five years old, right. What else do you remember about . . .

TW: Not too much. Oh, I remember my father used to have a part-time job as an insurance agent in Hilo. He used to walk from Kaiwiki to Hilo, and he used to spend some nights over there. And my mother got probably worried, and she used to carry me down—you know, before Saburo was born—carry me down to Hilo, and then walk back.

WN: Wow.

TW: Anyway, that's about what we can remember, because we stayed only for a short while there. Then we came to Waikīkī. There was an opening in Waikīki Japanese[-language] school.

WN: So when you were about seven years old, 1921, your family—you, and your brother, and your mother, and your father—moved from Kaiwiki to Waikīkī.

TW: To Waikīkī.

WN: Why did they make that move?

TW: Well, I mean, it's in town, and it's a bigger community that he could serve. So he thought it was a real good move on his part. That's where, too, he started going to school at the university [University of Hawai'i] from then on. He went part-time, at first. Then they said, "Why don't you become a full-time student? But we'll fit your program to fit the teaching school," because the Japanese[-language] school was after school, those days. So, in the morning, he would go to the university, come back, and teach Japanese school.

WN: Who recruited your father to come to Waikīkī?

TW: Well, that, I don't know. I really don't know.

MK: And what was the name of that Japanese-language school?

TW: Waikīkī Japanese-language School.

MK: Whereabouts was it first located?

TW: It was located on Paoakalani Avenue. There was a little stream [Hamohamo Stream] going just between the stores, remember? One side was Ibaraki Store, and the other side was Aoki Store. And in-between, there used to be a stream going down into the sea, and that's where we used to play in the stream and go down. I used to, from there, I used to go to the beach. As they say, I was more on the beach after school, and things like that, and so, I got really dark. One of the stories is that when they saw me, a visitor came to the Japanese[-language] school, he saw me, and he asked my father, "Is your wife a Hawaiian?" because I was so dark.

(Laughter)

"No." And so, anyway, that's where I stared surfing and swimming, and did most of my outside extracurricular thing.

MK: You know, going back to the school, I was wondering, where did all the kids come from, to go to that school?

TW: Oh, there used to be a Japanese [residential] camp, you know, in that area—in fact, two Japanese camps, because they serviced the hotels—the parents. And there were local stores around there, Japanese stores. So they had a pretty large community there.

MK: And you mentioned that there were like two Japanese camps there. What were the names of those two camps?

TW: Oh, I don't remember that.

MK: Was one of them Asuka Camp?

TW: Asuka Camp, yeah, was toward the sea. That was Asuka Camp. The other one was on the other side of Paoakalani. At first, you know, Paoakalani Street was called Lili'uokalani. Then, because there was another Lili'uokalani, they changed that to Paoakalani.

WN: And these Japanese families that lived in these camps, what kind of work did they do?

TW: Well, as I said, they serviced the hotel, for one thing, and then, they had their own shops. They had a store, they have a cleaning shop, they have taxi, and things like that.

WN: And how far away were you from the beach? How long a walk was it?

TW: Oh, well, let's see. About a hundred yards, or two hundred yards.

MK: And where exactly was your home? Where was your house that you lived in, in Waikīkī?

TW: Yeah, they had a little cottage [at 162 Paoakalani St.], just behind the Asuka Camp. In fact, we could hear the Asuka people [Miyo and Tokumatsu Asuka family] behind my bedroom. When they made loud noise, we could hear them.

MK: You know, when you think back to your days in Waikīkī, what names pop up, like Asuka? What other families lived there?

TW: Oh, the [Niro] Aoki family, that store. The Ibarakis, another store. The Morimotos, they had a cleaning shop. The [Isao] Nadamotos, they had a taxi. Yeah, those names come up right off hand. Nadamoto, the son [Ichiro Nadamoto] became a doctor, orthopedic man.

WN: And you said there was a stream right near there.

TW: Yes, right between, yeah.

WN: What kinds of things did you do in the stream?

TW: Well, I mean, catch the small, little *āholehole*s, *medaka*s, yeah. I mean, just playing around. No big fish, it's just a stream that came down from probably Pālolo side.

MK: And then, you mentioned that you would come down to the beach often.

TW: Yeah, mm-hmm.

MK: How did you learn to swim?

TW: That's another story. There's a stonewall that kept the water from getting into land—and I was sitting on the stonewall, and somehow, I slipped and fell into the water. That's when, how I learned to swim. (WN chuckles.) I fell in the water and had thrashed around, and they had to pick me up.

MK: So you were okay then.

(Laughter)

You somehow managed.

TW: Yeah. I guess I, what you call, dog swam or something like that until they picked me up, because there was people there. I was watching these people doing it, so that's how I learned how to swim.

WN: How about surfing, how did you learn how to surf?

TW: Well, those were the pastime of all the Hawaiian boys around that area. Then they had little surfboards. So we would go out and, you know, catch the waves if it was small. We had small surf, big surf, queen surf, king surf, things like that. We went through. . . . We graduated from little, small surf to big surf. (Chuckles)

WN: And you said you had small surfboard. What do you mean by that? You talking about a bodyboard kind of paddleboard?

TW: We had little body boards, but we had real small surfboards that we made from little planks. In fact, as I grew older, when I was in high school, I used to. . . . In fact, we bought one of those redwood planks, and I made my own surfboard. That's the surfboard that, you see, in my picture here, the ten-footer. I made that while I was in high school.

WN: Wow. So you got a redwood plank, and you shaped it into a board.

TW: Shaped it into a board.

WN: What about the skeg, how did you get that on?

TW: No, we didn't have any skeg.

WN: Oh, no more?

TW: Just plank.

WN: Wow.

TW: Those days, they didn't have any skeg.

MK: And like where did you store, and how did you transport that board?

TW: Oh, well, the big board, I used to carry it on my back from. . . . You know, we moved from Waikīkī to Kapahulu. The Waikīkī [Japanese-language] School moved to Campbell Avenue. I used to carry that from Campbell Avenue way down to Waikīkī on my shoulder.

MK: That's quite a ways.

TW: Ho, it's quite a ways.

MK: You know, when you were a kid, who were your playmates in Waikīkī?

TW: I didn't have too many playmates, in fact, in Waikīkī. Yeah, because one of the things is, they used to tease me, because I was the son of the principal. They used to harass me and things like that. So I didn't have too many friends. As you would say, I was kind of a loner. That's why I went to surf, you know. Surfing is still playing with the other boys.

WN: So these were mostly the Japanese kids that were teasing you . . .

TW: Oh, yeah.

WN: . . . because they went Japanese[-language] school. How about the Hawaiian boys?

TW: Well, they were all right. *Chee,* I can't think of their names now, but like on our street, had the Kaeos—[a member of that family] became a football player. And there was, oh, on the other side, on Paoakalani was Holt, the Holt family.

WN: [Lemon] "Rusty" Holt?

TW: Rusty Holt, that family was one.

MK: Would you be familiar with the Ewalikos or the Bishaws?

TW: Yes, Ewalikos and the Bishaws were there, uh-huh. Where'd you get those names? (WN laughs.)

MK: I heard about them, yeah.

WN: Bader, no?

MK: Mrs. Bader's family. Jacksons?

TW: No, that one, I don't know.

MK: Kaawakauwo?

TW: Kaawakauwo, no.

WN: De Rego?

TW: De Regos, yes, the Portuguese family. De Regos, yeah.

MK: You know, going back to your father's Japanese school, your father was the principal of the Japanese school. Was he also teaching in the school?

TW: Oh, of course. yes. My mother taught, too. So, one of my duties was to, well, after school, I used to. . . . We had a little outhouse with a *furo,* and I used to heat the *furo* with firewood underneath, so when they came home, the *furo* would be ready. And then we'd have the *furo.*

WN: So you'd make a fire every day, underneath the *furo?*

TW: I don't think so, not at Waikīkī. When we went to Kapahulu, then we, yeah.

MK: You know, being the Japanese-language school principal's son, how many years of Japanese language school did you go?

TW: I went to what they call it, *chūgakkō* [intermediate school]. And I didn't go to the Waikīkī Japanese[-language] School—was only until the sixth grade, right—so I went to Makiki for the *chūgakkō.*

MK: And can I ask, how were you, as a Japanese-language student?

TW: Well, I was way on the top. Had to be, because my father was a teacher and everything else. And, of course, my mother, too. They taught me, you know, that I would learn my Japanese. So I guess I was pretty good in Japanese.

WN: And what was it like having your father and your mother teaching you?

TW: That's why, as I say, it was difficult. They teased me because my parents were, you know, the principal and the teacher at the school.

WN: Did they treat you any differently than the other kids?

TW: You mean my parents treat me [differently]? No, no. As school concerned, no, no.

MK: What were your own feelings about being in Japanese[-language] school? What did you think?

TW: Well, I went through the motions, and I had to keep up because my parents were teachers, right? And as I said, I was, you know, fairly good, and like, for instance, in the *chūgakkō* at Makiki, I was either number one or number two [first or second best]. They used to grade, right? One, two, three, and all that.

WN: Now, prior to moving to Campbell Avenue in Kapahulu, you were about fourteen when you moved from Paoakalani to Campbell, about that time.

TW: Yeah, I guess.

WN: Prior to that, living in Paoakalani, you went to Waikīkī Elementary School.

TW: Right.

WN: What was that like? What was English school [i.e. public school] like for you?

TW: In my second grade, I had contracted encephalitis. I was in the hospital, Kuakini Hospital. And it was, I guess, touch-and-go, those days, you know. I remember my mother, from what they say, used to come to the hospital every day to check on me—after school hours, I think, like that, or before school hours, my mother used to come, because my father was at the university at that time. But my mother used to come. But fortunately, I got over that, and I don't have any residue from that encephalitis. Now, they call it dengue fever, yeah? They had that dengue fever time.

MK: You survived something really major, then, yeah?

TW: Yeah, so I was fortunate. So I missed the second grade. I missed almost the whole year in second grade. Then the third grade, I remember, I had a Portuguese teacher Texeira, who was very strict, and got us to toe the mark, you know. The principal at the Waikīkī school was Mrs. Mabel King. Now, that's related to the Kings, the Samuel King and all that. She was the principal. And so, anyway, I went through the sixth grade, and went to Washington Intermediate. Now, when Washington Intermediate was first formed, they didn't have a building. And they rented the Japanese[-language] school in Kaka'ako until it was finished. So, for about six months, I had to commute from Kapahulu to Kaka'ako.

MK: How did you do that?

TW: Well, as I remember, now, I used to walk most of the time. But there were streetcars, and I used to catch the streetcars. But streetcars took a long while. You know, they had to go through the marshes, the duck pond, and King Street, then go back to Kaka'ako. So it took a long time to get there, so walking there was almost as fast, going through that. Of course, it was at that time [1922–1928] when they were building the canal [Ala Wai Canal], too.

WN: Before moving to Kapahulu, and you're going to Waikīkī Elementary, how do you compare Waikīkī Elementary with going to Japanese[-language] school? Which one did you like better?

TW: Oh, I think the elementary school, yeah, because there I met and I could play around with people; whereas in Japanese[-language] school, I had to behave myself.

(Laughter)

WN: That's a good answer. Should we get him to . . .

MK: Oh, wait. You know, you mentioned that when you first went to Washington Intermediate, the buildings weren't ready, yet. So, were you like the first group of kids that graduated from Washington?

TW: That's right, yes, the first group. We went to—was it, [the area] used to be called Cummins [Estate]?

MK: And what do you remember about those intermediate school years, besides having to get there, in the beginning to Kaka'ako? Later on, when the buildings are built, and you were going to Washington, what sticks in your mind?

TW: Oh, not too much, because I guess I was too busy getting there and coming back, huh? (MK chuckles.) As I said, those were the times when they were dredging the canal, and that's when the [Myles] Fukunaga Case [a kidnapping and murder] and all that came up. That was when it was, yeah, I guess it was about that time [1928].

WN: Twenties, yeah, 1920s.

MK: What were you told about the Fukunaga case? Anything?

TW: No, not too much. At that time, I didn't know. I didn't realize.

MK: We met someone who is of Japanese background, and they were telling us that the parents were worried about, you know, something happening to them, that maybe somebody might take something out on them, because they were Japanese, so they were told, "Come back from school right away, don't dawdle." But for you, nothing like that?

TW: No, no.

WN: And what do you remember about the move from Paoakalani to Campbell? How did you feel about that?

TW: Well, couldn't help. We had to go. Of course, as I said, the thing was we were going to be further away from the beach for me, having to carry my board and things like that. Yeah. So, but well, it had to be done.

WN: And why did you folks make that move?

TW: Well, the thing is, the lease was over, and Lili'uokalani Trust wants to take it back for further development, and that's the reason why. My father thought—he negotiated for land in that Kapahulu area. He probably thought it was a good deal.

MK: And what was that Kapahulu community like? You know, you kind of told us what it was like, living in Waikīkī.

TW: In Waikīkī. The Kapahulu area, I don't have too much recollection because already, I was busy going back and forth from Kapahulu to Kaka'ako to, well, whatever places I wanted to go. Traveling was, you know, the main thing for me at that time. If I wanted to go to a show—I remember going to a show in Downtown—I had to catch the streetcar and all of that. It took me almost half a day to go to see a show and come back.

WN: And where was Shabo going to school?

TW: He went to same thing. He was in Waikīkī Elementary.

WN: So Shabo had to commute from Kapahulu to Waikīkī Elementary?

TW: Yeah, mm-hmm.

MK: What kinds of people lived near your family in Kapahulu?

TW: Well, fortunately, there was a store [Okamura Store] kitty-corner from us. What was that now? I can't think. I think it's in the book, but. . . . The daughter [Elaine Okamura] married the Las Vegas film star. What was her name now?

MK: Oh, the person who married Wayne Newton?

TW: Yeah.

MK: Okay, I can't think of her last name, either, but I know who you're thinking of. They owned the store?

TW: They owned it, yeah.

MK: Were there any other business around there, because where you lived in Waikīkī, there were quite a few businesses.

TW: Further down, way Kapahulu, the Campbell Avenue, extended up to Kapahulu Avenue. So way over there, there were stores and things. But we didn't branch out too much in that area, because, as I said, we were commuting directly to Waikīkī or to Kaka'ako from our house. The cottage in Kapahulu still stands, and it's a museum place now. We went back to see, and my brother and I went, we saw the original bathtub in there. He said, "Oh, that's where I used to take a bath."

MK: Great, great.

TW: It's a museum, now.

MK: And then, before we get into your McKinley High School days, I remember you mentioned that when your family moved to Waikīkī, your father taught school, and he also went to school.

TW: Yeah.

MK: He attended the University of Hawai'i.

TW: In the morning, yes.

MK: So, by that time, he had a command of English?

TW: Oh, yes. I mean, well, he met these young people at the university, like [Chitoshi] Yanaga, [Akiyoshi] Hayashida, and who else now? One of the funny things is, they wanted to learn how to dance, these young people, and they used to come to our place to practice dancing. They took my mom as a partner, and she was trying to dance with them.

MK: And this is America-style social dancing?

TW: Oh, yes.

WN: Ballroom dancing?

TW: Ballroom dancing.

WN: Oh, okay.

MK: And, your father, Shichiro Watanabe, what did he major in at the UH?

WN: *Chee,* I don't know what he majored in. I don't know, General Studies, I guess.

MK: General Studies. And did he participate in extracurricular activities there?

TW: Yes. He used to be a tennis player, on top of that. So in his off hours, he used to go to Kapi'olani Park—you know, the tennis court—he used to play tennis there. I would remember we used to go out there and—remember the *kiawe* bean? They used to have lots of *kiawe* trees, and we used to get bags of *kiawe* beans, and we used to sell them to the Dillinghams, the horse stables up on the slope. We used to . . .

WN: Okay, we're going to [change tapes] . . .

MK: Oh, hold on.

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TW: . . . up on the slopes of Diamond Head. And so, as I said, my father used to play tennis, and he became a member of the university team, too. There's a picture of him [in *Ka Palapala,* the university annual].

MK: And, you know, like your dad became very proficient in English. He got a degree from the University of Hawai'i. How about your mother? How proficient was she in English?

TW: Not as well. She remained more Japanese, because. . . . Well, for instance, her extracurricular work was teaching sewing, flower arrangement, and tea ceremony, and things like that. You know, her extracurricular. So she remained Japanese.

MK: Whereas your father . . .

TW: Went out, going out and meeting all these outside people.

MK: So he knew the Yanagas, the Hayashidas, and other niseis, basically, who are going to college in those days.

TW: Yes. Uh-huh.

MK: And because your father is proficient in English, going to UH, and your mom is also a Japanese school teacher, what was their role in the community? They're learned people?

TW: Yes, my father became a member of the Japanese school board. Anyway, he busied himself in that direction, too, as a member of the Japanese school board.

MK: And in terms of their involvement in the Japanese community, does something kind of stay in your mind about their going out to different events, or participating in different activities, or meetings?

TW: No, we had our own activities to attend to, so I didn't pay too much attention to what my parents did. But, of course, they had to go to these functions that the Japanese community participated in.

MK: And when it came to things like church activities, were they Buddhist or Christian, or not involved?

TW: They were Buddhist, but they were from Jōdō Mission, Jōdō. So they attended the Jōdō Mission whenever they could.

WN: Let me ask you about McKinley High School. What do you remember about going to McKinley?

TW: Well, those were good years. First of all, I went to McKinley, jumping one grade from the seventh grade to the ninth grade. I skipped the eighth grade. There were three of us from Washington Intermediate that skipped a grade and went to McKinley. One of them is still living—Lucille Louis was a classmate of ours from junior high and she's still living here. And in McKinley, I belonged to the science club and I also was on the swimming team. But one of the things that I couldn't do was, while I was swimming, I belonged to the Hui Makani Club in what used to be the [Waikīkī]War Memorial [Natatorium]. They used to have a coach that used to take us, and so I couldn't belong to the McKinley swimming team and Hui Makani. So, that's one of the things I missed out. And I participated in the band. The band became part of ROTC at McKinley High School, so I got a uniform. That carried on to university, the first year I went. I was a member of the band, but otherwise I couldn't have been without a citizenship. I couldn't be in the band, either, nor regular ROTC. I couldn't do that.

MK: So at that time, if you didn't have regular citizenship, you couldn't be in the ROTC?

TW: No.

MK: You know, many times we've heard of men who were, say, like in Boy Scouts.

TW: That's me. That's another thing. My friend wanted me to be in the Boy Scouts, so I got the uniform and everything, and we got in. Then to become a certified Boy Scout, one of the rules was you had to be a citizen. So I had to get away. So I concentrated mostly on the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association] side.

MK: With the YMCA, there were no restrictions?

TW: No.

MK: And what did you do in the YMCA? What activities did you get involved in over there?

TW: Even from the grade school, I mean, in Waikīkī grade school, the YMCA sent people to that area to form what they call "Indians" and "Pioneers." I don't know whether you recollect. So I became a member of the Indian club and became a member of the Pioneer club. Then at that time, too, there was a church at the end of Lili'uokalani, the real Lili'uokalani Avenue. The Kawaiaha'o Church had a branch out there, and that's where I used to go. You know, became a member or

whatever. I used to attend that church. The other thing was there was a Catholic church near that Aoki Store. Now, one of the times while I was walking around on that avenue on Sunday morning, this nun came and pulled me, and said, "We have to have you. You will be the," what, pallbearer [altar boy]? What do they call that, now? Acolyte, anyway, to light the candles and stuff like that. She pulled me, "Our boy is sick," so she put me—she say, "You go and light the candles."

(Laughter)

WN: Was this in St. Augustine's?

TW: Yeah, St. Augustine's. (WN chuckles.)

MK: You didn't become a member of St. Augustine's?

TW: No, no. As I said, I was with the Kawaiaha'o Church.

MK: What did your parents think about you becoming a member of a Christian church, rather than a Buddhist temple?

TW: That's the thing—they didn't mind at all. They thought it was great that at least I'm getting some kind of religion, I guess. (WN chuckles.)

MK: And then going back to you couldn't become ROTC, you couldn't become a Boy Scout. As young as you were, how did you feel about not being allowed to do these things?

TW: Well, couldn't help it, it was the law. You know, couldn't help it. But that's one of the reasons why my father said, when I went to the university, "You better concentrate on doing social work," which didn't require citizenship, "or else go into a profession that doesn't require citizenship." When, I think, the Yanagas came from a trip to Chicago and brought some literature about the new approach to education by Robert Hutchins [president, University of Chicago], that you could go at your own pace. And that's further on, but that's how I got introduced to the University of Chicago.

WN: You know, your father was a Japanese-language school principal and teacher, and your mother was a Japanese[-language] school teacher. And yet, your father went to the University of Hawai'i, he was on the tennis team. Would you say your upbringing was more Japanese? Did he stress more Japanese values or American values to you?

TW: Well, I wouldn't know. I think it was more American than Japanese, because my contacts, for instance, the grade school outside of Japanese[-language] school, was all with everybody else. I was associated more with those people than with the Japanese group, because, as I said, I was ostracized.

WN: And what languages did you speak at home?

TW: Japanese, mostly. Mostly Japanese, because my mother was more Japanese. But we spoke in English, too, of course, with my father.

WN: And going to McKinley High School, there was a strong emphasis on citizenship. I'm just wondering, with you not being a citizen and speaking a lot of Japanese at home, did that come into conflict at all?

TW: No, it didn't come into conflict, but, well, it was one of the things that I had to bear. As I said, one of the things that I got away with was being in the band. The band, they gave me a uniform to perform in and march with them. Same thing with the university, for the two years, I was in the band—I was marching with them.

MK: What instrument did you play?

TW: I played the clarinet and the saxophone.

MK: And I know that later on, your brother entered the field of music, and he was a long-time band teacher. In your home, was there a lot of encouragement to be interested in music?

TW: In music? Oh, yes, I think so. Yes, and of course, in a way, I was interested in music, anyway, from high school days. I used to have my own records and phonograph to play with.

WN: What kind of music did you like?

TW: Well, all kinds, of course.

MK: And then I have one more question about McKinley—well, actually, more questions—but I know that McKinley had a McKinley Citizenship Club, so something like MCC?

TW: No, I couldn't belong to that, because it was a citizenship club. So instead of that, as I said, I joined the science group, and with my swimming outside.

MK: And I know that in those days, MCC was for like the really good students, yeah?

TW: Oh, yeah.

MK: The exemplary students. And the fact that you already skipped a grade earlier, you know. And how were you as a student at McKinley?

TW: I guess I was pretty good.

MK: What subjects did you like the most at McKinley?

TW: Well, I don't know whether I liked anything, but I guess I liked physics and chemistry, and mostly in the sciences.

MK: Were there any teachers that kind of stand out in your mind, in those days?

TW: Yes, but I can't think of their names now. Oh, one of the chemistry teachers was Mr. [William] Geiger. Geiger. And the other one, what was his name now? Physics teacher.

MK: Were they encouraging?

TW: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Like for instance, one of the things the chemistry teacher used to do was collect the films and get the silver from the films. He used to do that. We used to help him do that.

WN: The silver from the . . .

TW: From the X-ray films.

WN: Oh, oh.

TW: I recollect that part, we used to help him do that. I don't know how we did it. (Chuckles)

WN: And your principal was Miles Cary?

TW: Miles Cary.

WN: What were your recollections of him?

TW: Not too much, not at that time. But strangely, he became associated with one of the relocation camps, right?

MK: Right. Still stayed in education, yeah.

WN: Then at what point in your education did you say that you're going to go on for college?

TW: Oh, that was understood that from McKinley, from high school, I would go to the University of Hawai'i. But at the University of Hawai'i, when I was introduced in chemistry and physics and all of that, and then this different curriculum at the University of Chicago came up, I made an application. Strangely enough, they accepted me at the university. I had all of the requisites to enter medical school with my grades or, I mean, the points at the University of Hawai'i. So when I went to Chicago, and they said, "Well, you can do, but what I think you need to do is broaden yourself. After all, it's just not medicine you want to practice. You're lacking in the social [sciences]." So the advisor there gave me or steered me into taking social sciences and humanities to broaden my field That's why I didn't graduate in '35 like I should have. It took me another year at the university to finish up in '36.

WN: So you started at the University of Hawai'i . . .

TW: Yes.

WN: . . . in 1931, and then . . .

TW: [Nineteen] thirty-two.

WN: Thirty-two, and then you . . .

TW: Went to Chicago.

WN: . . . transferred from the University of Hawai'i to Chicago.

TW: Mm-hmm.

WN: So you weren't able to take some social sciences and humanities at UH?

TW: No, because I was concentrating on the regular courses—English, history and all that. Plus the sciences—biology, and physics, and chemistry, mostly.

MK: So when you were at the University of Hawai'i, were you in a pre-med curriculum already, or still trying . . .

TW: Still, yeah, general.

MK: And, you know, here you are. Up to the time you went to Chicago, had you ever been outside of the Territory of Hawai'i?

TW: Nope, no.

MK: Had you ever traveled to the neighbor islands?

TW: Oh, well, from Hilo to . . .

MK: To O'ahu?

TW: Yeah.

MK: Oh, okay.

(Laughter)

So, when you went to the Mainland the first time, what was that like for you?

WN: This was 1934.

TW: No, '32, huh?

WN: You graduated from McKinley in nineteen . . .

TW: Thirty-one.

WN: So you were at UH for only like one year?

TW: Two years.

WN: So about . . .

TW: Thirty-three.

WN: This is, then, the Depression, now.

TW: They had the World's Fair in Chicago. Now, that's another story. When I went to Chicago, I stayed at the YMCA in Chicago. There, I met with Dr. [Isamu] Tashiro, who lived at the International House, part of the. . . . I mean, in the University of Chicago complex. He lived there. He said, "Why don't you come and stay in the university, this International House? We'll try and get you the most reasonable room down there. In the meantime, you can stay with me." So at that time, too, as I said, the World's Fair was on. And he said, "You know, they can use you at this Japanese tea garden, in the World's Fair." This tea garden was operated by people from Texas, Breckenridge Park, that had a tea garden, a Japanese tea garden, in back of his spa in Texas. And they came over to run the Japanese tea garden at the World's Fair. So there, that's where I started to work part-time at the World's Fair. And there, I met Kenji Onodera, from—he was from the University of Illinois—and I was working there. He was there the first year of the World's Fair. The World's Fair started in '32, this was '33—the second year. So he showed me. And this Jingu family had, let's see. I still remember five girls and one boy. Finally a boy, Jimmy. So, they were trying to get the oldest to match up with Kenji Onodera, and they finally, you know, got married later on. But they were trying to match me up with the second daughter—Ruth, I think it was. But I shied away from that. (MK and WN chuckle.)

So anyway, those were the days, the hard days, when I was at Chicago with my father sending me money for the tuition. And even in those days, I think the tuition was, I think, a hundred dollars a quarter. Now, of course, it's ten times that, more than that. But he used to send me that tuition for the school, and spending money for my allowance, which was about hundred dollars. And as I said, those were the hard days, because while I was working, one of the times we only had twenty-five cents in our pocket. Those were the days when they still had hamburgers for five cents—[White Castle] hamburgers. And coffee for five cents. So, Kenji and I went to get those. And it was one of those times when Mary came running with the money that, you know, the father had given her to pass on to Kenji. So when she came, we had to splurge on hamburgers and I think we went to spaghetti—yeah, we went to spaghetti. We got some. But anyway, those were the hard times, when we only had twenty-five cents in our pocket.

WN: That was [Great] Depression time, too.

TW: Oh, yes, it was [Great] Depression time.

WN: And you were at the tea garden at the World's Fair. What did you do?

TW: Well, one of the things I. . . . Well, of course, we served the, I remember, the crabmeat salad. You know, we chopped up a celery, and lettuce, and mixed it up with crabmeat. That was one of the popular items. Of course, we had tea, and *senbei,* and we had *yokan*—things like that—to serve.

WN: So it was a Japanese tea garden-type restaurant.

TW: Yes.

WN: Ah, I see. And you were like the waiter, busboy?

TW: Yeah, I did everything. Waited on tables, cleaned the vegetables, and, well, whatever.

WN: And how much did you get paid, do you remember?

TW: I don't remember how much I got paid, but at least we got a pass. And the World's Fair, so we could go around to enjoy all the World Fair concessions.

MK: And was that your first work experience?

TW: Yeah. I mean, I guess so. (Chuckles)

MK: So when you were like going to UH or McKinley, you didn't have to work?

TW: No, I didn't.

MK: But what did you think when you first went to Chicago? You know, you left Honolulu for the first time.

TW: Yes. You know, when I went to Chicago, we stopped off at Los Angeles. And we went to a YMCA there. Now, from Los Angeles, as I said, I went to the YMCA in Chicago. And this was the first time I met the discrimination. You know, the colored people couldn't go into the YMCA in Chicago. Because when I went back to the International House, we had all kinds of people—colored, as well as. . . . So I wanted to take this colored person to my place in the YMCA. "No," he said, "I can't go there."

WN: And this International House that you stayed in, you said there were different people of different backgrounds there. For example, where were a lot of people from?

TW: Oh, all over the world. I have a yearbook that tells you where they came from. And they still send me pamphlet for donations and stuff. (WN chuckles.)

MK: And then this Dr. Tashiro, who told you about International House, who was he? How did you happen to meet him?

TW: Well, that, I didn't know him at all, but finally we found out that he was, in a way, related to Alice [TW's wife], because Alice's uncle married Dr. Tashiro's sister. So, later on, we found out that, you know, she was related to Tashiro. And then—what's his name—Tsukiyama, Ted Tsukiyama, he's related.

MK: So this Dr. Tashiro had Hawai'i roots?

TW: Yes. He was born in Waimea. I don't know how he got to dentistry in Chicago, but he graduated from dental school in Illinois and was practicing in this area, Sixty-third Street. Now, Fifty-ninth Street is the street where the university runs, and there's a kind of an arcade between Fifty-ninth and Sixty-third. They had this canal built going through there. Now they had grassed it up. So, that's the space that they had. But he was practicing on Sixty-third Street.

MK: And how did you happen to meet him, though?

TW: That's why, I really don't know, except that he went. . . . How did I get to meet? I can't remember.

MK: It was good that you met him, though, because he helped put you to a good place.

TW: Oh, yes. Yes, and the thing is, later on, he was a real ambassador for Japan, Japanese culture. He used to cook sukiyaki to all the church groups. All those, you know. And they used to invite him, and I used to go with him and cook sukiyaki for church groups all around that area.

MK: You know, you mentioned that when you first went to the Mainland, you stayed at the YMCA in LA, and then you went to the YMCA at Chicago. Was there someone in the Honolulu YMCA that kind of helped you out to make these arrangements or. . . ?

TW: No, I don't think so.

MK: You kind of did it?

TW: Yeah. Because I was, you know, part of the YMCA group.

WN: And you said that you were exposed to some of the ideas and teachings of Robert Hutchins, who was the president of the University of Chicago. How were you influenced by some of that, by some of his writings and teachings? And did you ever meet him?

TW: I guess I met him, yes, in one of those social functions where the president meets all of the students and things like that.

WN: But there was no mentorship relationship or anything like that?

TW: No.

MK: And it was Chitoshi Yanaga that suggested Chicago to your family and you?

TW: I think it was Chitoshi. (Pause) No, maybe not Chitoshi. There's somebody who had connections. I think it was a minister. I forgot what his name was, that went to the theological seminary, or one of those seminaries around the University of Chicago that brought that literature to us.

MK: Oh, interesting, yeah?

WN: How was the weather for you?

TW: Oh, it was terrible.

(Laughter)

It was really, really cold. It was one of those years, that was about the coldest in Chicago. Had snow. But anyway, I learned how to skate.

(Laughter)

WN: Chicago is cold.

TW: Yeah. Windy. That's why they call it "The Windy City." And it's really cold.

HY: Two minutes.

WN: Well, anyway, you finished at the University of Chicago in 1937, and then—I'm sorry, it's, yeah, 1937, then you continued at Chicago for medical school, correct?

TW: Yes.

WN: The Rush Medical College?

TW: Yes.

WN: So next time, why don't we start from that point, and then we'll get into the war.

TW: Okay.

WN: Okay?

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape Nos. 55-33-2-10 and 55-34-2-10

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Tetsui Watanabe (TW)

Honolulu, Hawai‘i

March 19, 2010

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN) and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

WN: Session number two, with Tetsui Watanabe, on March 19, 2010. The interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto.

Good morning, Dr. Watanabe.

TW: Good morning.

WN: We were just talking off tape. First question I wanted to ask you, really, was why did you choose to go to Rush Medical College in Chicago?

TW: I chose Rush Medical College because at that time, University of Chicago did not have a medical school. They were trying to form a medical school, so they gave an option, whether to stay on the campus in this new medical college, or go to the Rush Medical College on the west side of Chicago, where it was located. So I opted to go to the regular Rush Medical College, instead of staying at the newly established medical school on the campus.

MK: You were mentioning earlier that Rush Medical College was near certain hospitals?

TW: Yes. It was close to Cooke County Hospital, and also the Presbyterian Hospital, where Rush Medical College was located at.

MK: And you were also saying that with Rush Medical, would that have been a more established place?

TW: Yes.

MK: And did you continue to live at International House, while going to Rush Medical College?

TW: For the time being, I was there at the International House. But commuting was too much of a trouble, so I moved over to the YMCA on the west side. The YMCA was just almost a block away from Rush Medical College. So when I went to the YMCA, I chose the cheapest room, above—the fifth floor of the YMCA. And it so happened that, you know, Chicago has this “L,” the “Loop,” the train? Well, that train came buzzing around, right by my corner, and oh, my. My bedroom and everything shook when “L” came around. But anyway, I had to manage staying there.

MK: What was it like, living over there, for you?

TW: Well, I was so busy attending to lectures, and going to the hospitals, the dispensaries, and things like that. So I was kept very busy.

MK: And, you know, you mentioned that you chose the cheapest room. How were you supporting yourself as you continued your studies?

TW: Well, that's where my father came in, again. He kept sending me my monthly check to go to school.

MK: And in those days, how much was enough for you to do okay?

TW: Well, I guess you have to do fifty dollars a month. That included my food, the board, and whatever extra for books and supplies that I needed. Yeah, it was quite a, well, hardship in a way to make ends meet.

WN: And how would you compare your academic load at Rush, compared to the University of Chicago?

TW: The academic load was much easier in a way, because the school and everything was right there. You know, at the University of Chicago, you had to go to different departments, scattered around the hospital there.

WN: And you chose, as your specialty, radiology?

TW: Yes.

WN: Why did you choose radiology?

TW: Well, that's another story. In the classrooms that we had, there is an amphitheater, so-called. The lecturer is at the bottom, and the students are going up in tiers to the top. Well, I usually was way on the top, and it so happened when they showed this X-ray—lecture time, they showed films, and they would pass the films up for the students to look at and to see what was going on. So, one of the times, they had the lecture, they sent up a film, and they said, "The student at the bottom sent me the wrong question"—I mean, answer—"to the film." And when I replied, the lecturer said, "You better come down over here. You better take this course over again."

So you remember I was at the Chicago campus, and there was a hospital and they had an X-ray department there. So in the summertime, between classes, I went to the X-ray department at the university, and I had a part-time job there, working in the darkroom. So that's where, in a way, I got started in X-ray, because then I got interested in X-ray itself.

WN: And you mentioned that you went out as pairs into the community to provide medical services.

TW: Oh, yes, at Rush Medical College. For deliveries, that's when we out in pairs. But we went out into the dispensary. As I told you, the medical school was on top with the Presbyterian Hospital, and they had a dispensary taking care of the indigents that came around. So we used to have access to looking over or taking care of the indigent people, so we had first-hand knowledge instead of just lectures. We went to get first-hand knowledge, right? We're looking at the patients that just came in.

WN: And you had a story about you and a partner going out to west side areas, and providing medical care?

TW: Yes. As I told you, in the delivery in the OB/GYN, we went out in pairs to deliver out in the outlying area, because that west side was mostly made up of lower-income people. So they had access to indigent care. And we went out for delivery in pairs.

WN: And you had a story about a relative of a famous person?

TW: At one time, we went to go deliver in this area, we had to deliver a niece of Al Capone. Now, the nephew that was there said, "Now, you boys better get me a boy, or else." (MK and WN chuckle.) So fortunately, the baby was a boy, and we were celebrated by the boy. He gave us, you know, some wine for the celebration. But I don't know what would have happened if it was a girl.

(Laughter)

MK: You know, in those days, I know that you chose radiology as your field of specialty. But what would have been your second choice had you not gone into radiology?

TW: I would think I would have gone into internal medicine, to take care of patients.

MK: And I was also wondering, you know, this is the late 1930s. There's no problem with Japan, yet. You're a Japanese American. How did people react to you, in those days?

TW: I had no trouble reacting to people at that time, because especially in that west side, the hospital, there were quite a lot of Oriental students, and quite a lot of them came from Hawai'i. Northwestern University had their medical college in that area, too. There's also Loyola Medical School right around there. Then there's some dental schools in that area, too. So there was quite a number of Oriental—I mean, people—and quite a number of Hawai'i people.

MK: You know, when you look back on those days, what are the names of some of the Hawai'i people that you remember, going to that schools, same time as you?

TW: Oh, yes. Now, for instance, there was people like [a doctor who] went to Kona and became a physician there. Dr. Takaki, who also became a physician here in Honolulu.

WN: Herbert Takaki?

TW: Herbert Takaki.

WN: Yeah, he was my doctor, both of our doctors.

MK: Both of us had him, as children.

TW: So he was from there. Dr. [Isami] Umaki, who was an obstetrician. They were from Northwestern, Dr. . . . Who else was there now? (Kuramoto) Dr. Kanai. Quite a number of Hawai'i people and Hawai'i students, at that time.

MK: Did you folks get together, socially?

TW: Well, socially, I was more oriented to the International House, so I didn't get to see. . . . For instance, in Northwestern's group, they had a nice group there. Dr. Kuramoto was there, Dr. Mitsuda was there, and the dentist, Dr. Aoki, and Dr.—what was his name now? It slipped my mind. But they were there, at Northwestern. They had their gatherings. Sometimes, I would go to that group, where they lived in, the dorm, near the lake, in Uptown, what they call, Chicago.

WN: And in a previous interview, you mentioned the influence of a Dr. [Paul] Hodges on you.

TW: Yes.

WN: Can you talk about Dr. Hodges?

TW: Now, Dr. Hodges was the radiologist at Billings Hospital—that's the name of the hospital at the University of Chicago. And he, as I said, when I went to from a specialty as a radiologist, he was the one who was the head of the department there. So when he saw me there, he said, "Well, why don't you come in to our department, start as a regular student in radiology?" That's the start of my association with Dr. Hodges, Paul Hodges.

WN: So, in essence, you were a resident in radiology in 1941.

TW: Yes.

WN: So, in other words, when you finished your Rush Medical College, you spent some time at St. Joseph's Hospital in Joliet, Illinois?

TW: Yes.

WN: What was that for?

TW: When you finish your medical school, you have to go out for internship. A lot of the states require internship before you get a license. So that's where I went to, St. Joseph's Hospital for my internship. Then after the internship, I went back for my residency in radiology, because Dr. Hodges took me as a resident.

WN: And this was at the University of Chicago, this was not Rush Medical College?

TW: No.

WN: So this was at the new med school?

TW: The Billings Hospital.

WN: Oh, the new hospital. And where did you live, when you came back to Chicago?

TW: Again, I went back to the International House. Of course, when I was a resident, they had residents' quarters in the hospital, so I stayed in the residents' hall.

MK: What was the daily life like, for a resident?

TW: Well, we were busy, of course, with our schedule. In X-ray, we had to read the films, make diagnosis, and go to the different departments to find out what they needed. But after that, we went to our residents' quarters, and we relaxed in the residents' quarters. One of the funny stories I have at this time is that in the physiology department, they had a white horse doing some kind of research. One of the residents had the bright idea that we bring the white horse into our residents' quarters. I don't know why. (MK laughs.) But anyway, we brought this white horse in there. Then got some of the crazy notions that we had. We brought the horse, walked the horse up and down, and we brought it down. (Chuckles) The crazy things that we did at the residence.

MK: Did someone discover that the horse was missing from its regular place?

TW: No, I guess we were, well, we didn't try and stay that long, I mean.

MK: You know, since the training facilities at the University of Chicago were new, at that time, were you folks having access to like the newest type of equipment?

TW: Oh, yes.

MK: And newest techniques?

TW: That's right. We learned the newest techniques. Dr. Hodges was mechanically inclined in some ways. One of the things that he, well, found was during an X-ray examination of a person, he made this tilted table. Instead of lying down flat all the time, he got this table to tilt upright, and so that we could do that examination in an upright position. Like for instance, taking a stomach X-ray. Remember, you have to drink some barium, the white liquid? Well, when in supine position, you had to drink it with a straw. In an upright position, you could just drink it with a cup and bring it down. He had one of those things. The other thing that he made was what we called a spot film. You know, every time you wanted to take a film of a process, we had to get the X-ray machine and take the X-ray. Now, this way, he had a device that went up and down. We could move the spot film device right, tilt it to the patient, and go up and down in a vertical movement, also in a horizontal movement, and take a picture. He had the film in this moving frame, and we would take that picture. Now, those are the things that are new. When we first came back, I had those things put in the X-ray machine here.

MK: And one more question. In those days, was. . . . Nowadays, you hear about radiation being used for therapeutic reasons. In those days, were you folks using the X-ray machines for treatment, as well as for diagnosis?

TW: Oh, yes. They had the two departments—diagnostic and therapeutic department. Of course, the therapeutic department had the X-ray, also dealt with radium for treatment—the isotopes of radium, so radon for treatment. But we used X-rays for treatment, too. They built X-ray machines. One of the machines that they had Dr. Hodges build, too, was, instead of having an X-ray machine just going to one area at one time, he had this revolving machine that he could position all over.

MK: So, were you also trained in that, too?

TW: I was trained in that, too, yes.

MK: So you were trained in things that, maybe, Hawai‘i still didn't have.

TW: Oh, yes. I mean, they didn't have. Well, they used X-rays for treatment, in a way, but they didn't have that kind of equipment that we developed at the university.

MK: And then, one more question that I have is, in those days, as a medical student, were you folks informed of the possible risks to yourselves?

TW: Of course, that's why one of the things that we found out that radiation, a lot of people had radiation burns without using gloves. So they used lead-lined gloves for when we did the examination. But one of the things that we developed there was this flexible glove. Instead of lead-lined glove, we impregnated lead in the form of, I suppose, a liquid form, so that when you got into the glove, it was flexible. So we used these protection by X-ray. That's one of the things that later on, when I was in the camp, I had to do a lot of fluoroscopy for the incoming people, especially the cooks, to be sure that they don't have tuberculosis, right? So what I did was I

fluoroscoped their chest, and I fluoroscoped all the cooks. I used, you know, X-rays, with gloves, of course. I used to fluoroscope about, oh, ten to twenty patients, about, in an hour, you know, to check about the possibility of tuberculosis among the cooks and people at the camps.

WN: And, you know, you finished your residency in 1941. So what happened after that, when you finished residency at Chicago?

TW: Well, after, let me see, now? Oh, that's when the war started.

WN: But, just before the war, were you in Los Angeles?

TW: Yeah, uh-huh.

WN: So, from the time that you finished your residency . . .

TW: Oh, after my residency, well, I came back home.

WN: This was in early 1941?

TW: Early 1941.

WN: You came to Honolulu, mm-hmm.

TW: I came home. And fortunately, I got a permit to get a license, in spite of lack of citizenship. The [territory] of Hawai'i gave me a license. So I came back to practice medicine. At that time, there were, I think, two radiologists—one at Queen's, and one at the Japanese Hospital.

WN: [Japanese Hospital at] Kuakini?

TW: And these radiologists had their private offices in Downtown in the [Alexander] Young Hotel building. Doctor . . .

(Doorbell rings. Taping interrupted, then resumes.)

And, where was I? So, when they said, you know, "We cover both places, so we don't need a third radiologist." So one of the doctors in Dillingham Building, and I can't recollect his name [Dr. Grover Batten], but he says, "You can do practice. I have an X-ray machine. You can come and use my machine and practice radiology." But when I saw that I had no future in Honolulu in radiology, I was in contact with my classmate, I told you, that had the same name, Watanabe, from Los Angeles. Now, I was in touch with him.

He told me, "Why don't you come to Los Angeles and practice? Go to the Japanese Hospital. They need a radiologist there. They could use a radiologist there." So that's when I went back to Los Angeles, right before the war broke out.

WN: So this is Tom Watanabe . . .

TW: That's right.

WN: . . . your Rush Medical College classmate.

TW: Yes.

MK: And there was a Japanese Hospital in LA?

TW: Yes, they had a Japanese hospital, and I just found out that it was on 113 Fickett Street, in the Boyle Heights area. If you know, Los Angeles, right outside, there's a Boyle Heights area, where the Japanese used to live.

WN: So you went to work at LA, to work in Japanese Hospital.

TW: Yes. I was there maybe about three months, in July—end of July, August, September. Oh, later than that. Anyway, I was practicing radiology when the war broke out.

WN: And how would you compare the atmosphere in LA, prior to the war, with Chicago? I mean, how was it like being a Japanese in LA, just before the war broke out?

TW: Well, of course, this was a Japanese community that I was in, so I made friends there, among the young people. Outside of my work at the hospital, which was usually just during the day, at night I would come home and socialize with people, go to Japanese town in LA. That's one of those mornings when I went, and that's where we were having breakfast when we heard the story about, the news about Pearl Harbor.

WN: So you were having breakfast?

TW: Yeah.

WN: How did you feel when you heard the news?

TW: Well, for one thing, I knew that I was in trouble because I was an alien. So that's when I went, right away, to, in a way, to enlist in the army. That's when I was told, "You're overqualified, you can't do that." This was when they were corralling all the Japanese doctors at the time, to form a group to help out about the. . . . After that, of course, the segregation thing came, when the Japanese were going to be relocated. So, this was right about that time.

MK: I know you mentioned that you tried to enlist in the military, and they said that you were overqualified. Was your alien status also an issue?

TW: Well, I guess it was. I mean, they wouldn't take me in because. . . .

WN: And I was wondering, being an alien, how did your. . . . People like Tom Watanabe, for example, was a citizen, right? Did you feel any difference between yourself and people like Tom?

TW: No. As far as social contacts and everything, I didn't feel any different from anybody else. In fact, one of the things was, when we went out at those times, there was segregation. The Japanese people were ostracized, in a way. They couldn't go to certain places in downtown Los Angeles, they couldn't go to restaurants, certain places. The Japanese people were very, well, shy about going into town from outside of their community. So, being the Hawaiian, I used to roam around—I didn't care. I used to go to these places. But where there was segregation, they wouldn't let me in. But as I told them, "Geez, I'm a Hawaiian."

"But still, you're Japanese." So they wouldn't let me in.

WN: So when Pearl Harbor was attacked, when you heard the news about Pearl Harbor, you consciously thought of your alien status right away?

TW: Oh yes. Yes.

WN: And how soon from December 7 to the time you went to enlist, when was that?

TW: Well, in about a week.

WN: Oh.

TW: Yeah.

WN: What made you want to enlist?

TW: Well, I thought that maybe I could get citizenship by enlisting in the army.

MK: You know, on December 7, what were your thoughts about your family back in Hawai'i?

TW: Yes, I was worried about them, of course. But at that time, my father had a lieutenant in the military that was studying Japanese with him. Now, he came back—he was in the Marine Corps—and he came back to Los Angeles and told me that, as far as my parents were concerned, they were all right. "So you don't have to be worried about them." Of course, he didn't tell me that my parents were being ostracized because they were pro-American in that Japanese neighborhood.

MK: So, you know like in those early days, many Japanese-language school principals, Japanese businessmen, people of influence in the Japanese community, they were all hauled in and eventually placed in camps.

TW: That's right.

MK: Your father was not.

TW: Was not, right. Well, not only that, he had this marine living with him. So, more so they thought that he was, what you call, *inu* [informer] and they treated him as such.

WN: Let's stop right here and change tape.

END OF TAPE 55-33-2-10

TAPE NO. 55-34-2-10

WN: Okay, tape two, session two with Tetsui Watanabe.

You were talking about your father, and why he was never interned.

TW: Yes. As I said, he had this marine living with him. The other thing was, his friends, like Akiyoshi Hayashida, wanted him to help them out because they were, I mean, Hayashida was in OSS [Office of Strategic Services], and Father was recruited in a way to do OSS work.

MK: So it's because your father had some ties with American military men, and because he was assisting in the OSS work?

TW: Yes.

MK: . . . that you think that he was not pulled in?

TW: Oh, yes. Uh-huh. Because that's one of the things that I wanted to know—why he is not recognized of his work in OSS.

MK: That's really intelligence work, yeah?

TW: Yeah.

MK: You also mentioned that because of his involvement with Americans and the wartime, he was sort of ostracized by the Japanese community. Can you talk about that, from what you've heard or know what happened to your family during the war?

TW: Well, for one thing when my mother went out to get some vegetables and she would try to buy some vegetables, they wouldn't give it to her. So she had the neighbors that knew her, they bought their vegetables and gave it to her. Things like that happened. So finally, the Japanese school in that area made it very uncomfortable for them to stay. They moved out to Koko Drive. They found a place.

MK: You know, your dad's primary employment up till the time of the war was to be a Japanese-language school teacher and principal. So during the war, how did he support himself and the family?

TW: Well, he was still teaching, I guess, and, oh, and at that time, too, he was part-time instructor at the university, don't forget. He was an instructor, that's why.

MK: He was teaching Japanese language.

TW: And became, yeah, instructor in Japanese at the university. He was under, what was his name? [Tasaku] Harada? Japanese department in the University of Hawai'i. So he worked under him.

WN: Okay.

MK: Oh, one more question—was the Japanese community over here generally aware of what was happening to you? I mean, you were in a camp.

TW: No, I mean, they had no clue. There was no contact with the Japanese community for me, because I was there for quite some time already, I mean, on the Mainland for quite some time.

MK: So generally, the Japanese community here did not know that the son of Shichiro Watanabe was also in the camps on the Mainland? They wouldn't have known?

TW: No.

WN: Okay, so then Pearl Harbor was attacked, you went in to enlist, you weren't allowed to enlist into the military. What happened after that?

TW: After the proclamation that the West Coast was to be evacuated, as they set up these centers where the Japanese would be segregated into these camps, so-called, one of the camps in the Los Angeles area was Manzanar, way up in Owens Valley. To supply or to man the medical care of the evacuees at Manzanar, they had some Japanese doctors to go there. The person that was chosen to go there was a Dr. [Yoshiye] Togasaki. She was a public health doctor. I was asked to go with her to check the facilities there. So, I went with her just to see how the facility would be. Then we came back. The second time I went with her, she brought her car and we went there and she stayed. I brought her car back to LA. So, I only visited Manzanar as an associate to take Dr. Togasaki and bring her back.

MK: How did you know Dr. Togasaki?

TW: I didn't know her at that time, until they told me to, they asked me to go with her.

MK: So it wasn't Dr. Togasaki that asked you, but . . .

TW: No, the—I don't know, the person who was in charge of medical care for the camps. And I forgot his name, even.

WN: And when you saw Manzanar for the first time, what was that like? How did you feel?

TW: Oh, that was quite a place. It was really isolated. It was kind of dusty. It was the mountains on one side, and it was really an isolated area.

MK: You know, at that time, you kind of knew what these places were going to be for—you know, to assemble the Japanese. What were your thoughts about the Japanese being placed into places like Manzanar?

TW: Well, that was the order, so we had to comply. We couldn't do anything else. As we said, as soon after that came, we were trying to help people out to get there and stayed, so their things gathered, so they could. . . . Because the order was, later, that you can go with only what you could carry, and you couldn't carry very much. So people were trying to get rid of all their furniture, or big household things. People came around, trying to bargain with them. For instance, could get a refrigerator for probably a dollar, or something like that. There were people. . . . Of course there were friends or family that said, "We'll take care of your things, and we'll store it for you." But anyway, people were trying to get their goods and all that, and that's where I started to help people—getting things ready.

MK: In those early days, you know, being Japanese, did you experience any incidents where non-Japanese had strong feelings about you?

TW: No, I don't think I had, because I was mostly with the Japanese people. The only thing is, as I said, the incidents when people tried to bargain and buy things. But those people, well, they didn't try to intimidate us or the Japanese.

MK: And in your case, what did you have, in terms of belongings? You had gone to Hawai'i, and then come back to LA. What did you have at that point?

TW: Well, at that point, it was strange. One of the few belongings I had was a golf set, I had a piano, I had my radio and my phonograph player. Those are the big possessions that I had.

WN: And what became of all that?

TW: Well, the piano, I don't know what happened. But the golf clubs, I gave to somebody. My Victrola, my radio, so that I took with me. I had it packed, carted.

MK: How about records? Did you have your records?

TW: Yes, so many records. So I was fortunate to be able, at least, to get a box to cart the things, and they let me bring those instead of just one bag.

WN: I'm wondering, you know, you are a physician, sort of a high status in the community. I was wondering if you were treated any differently from, say, most of the Japanese that were interned?

TW: Well, I would say, in a way, they kinda respected a doctor, being a doctor. You know, we're a little bit better [treated] than the other people would be treated.

WN: Well, people like Dr. Togasaki was, you know, asked to go to Manzanar, and you also went to Manzanar for a little while. Was that unusual, being a doctor being in LA to just sort of go on your free will to Manzanar and inspect the area? Was that different?

TW: No, I don't think it was different. So that is, well, if I could read my journal—it started at that time. Tells you all what I felt.

WN: [To MK:] Good to have the journal. Oh, okay.

MK: Let me just ask a question. You know, you said you had a piano, a radio, a phonograph, golf clubs. Where were you living?

TW: Oh, I had an apartment in Boyle Heights, and the apartment was managed by—oh, what was his name now? Anyway, the sister of Hazel Hirata—Yamaguchi?—the sister, they had a photo studio, and she was a photographer. He managed that. Now when he came back, he had a photo studio here, and I can't think of his name now. No, I can't think of his name. And the name of the studio was after the son, so.

MK: But it was that family that rented . . .

TW: Yeah, I mean, they managed the rental unit.

MK: No, it just kind of surprised me that you had a piano. I hadn't expected you to be so settled, you know. (WN chuckles.) So did you play piano a lot?

TW: Well, I tried to. I mean, it was just to doodle around.

MK: Interesting. And, you know, before we go on, you had mentioned that you were working at the Japanese Hospital in LA. How big of a hospital was that?

TW: It was, I think, was about a sixty-bed hospital, if I remember.

MK: And privately run by a Japanese doctor?

TW: No.

MK: No?

TW: Well, I mean, Japanese doctors used to go there, of course. There was a famous surgeon by the name of [Kikuo] Tashiro there. There was a OB/GYN by the name of Kobayashi over there, I think. And quite a few—Fuji. . . . Fujiwara. So it was run by Japanese doctors—a board of Japanese doctors.

MK: And it provided all the services?

TW: Oh, yeah.

MK: OB/GYN till . . .

TW: Yes.

MK: Very self-contained, then.

TW: Yes.

MK: And, you know, when curfews were set, saying that Japanese could not be out on the streets at a certain time, or couldn't travel beyond a certain distance, how did that affect you as a doctor? Would you have to go out on late-night calls or anything?

TW: No, no. I was, as I said, I was already a radiologist—my hours were from 8 [A.M.] to 4 [P.M.].

MK: True, yeah? So no problems with that?

TW: No problem with that, no. So, of course, the curfew hours, we socialized in blacked-out windows and things like that.

WN: So, okay, after the executive order came, you went to Tulare Assembly Center?

TW: Tulare. As I had told you, being a bachelor, they found it very convenient to get me, on a dime's notice, to go to Tulare. Here, I was trying to help out to go to Manzanar, but they said, "We need someone in Tulare." Of course, there were quite a number of doctors in that area, too, but to start off the center, they thought that they could get me there before the others came.

WN: Did you have a choice?

TW: No. Well, they told me to go there, as I said. Being a bachelor, I mean, I could carry this out.

WN: So what was Tulare like, Tulare Assembly Center. This is near Fresno.

TW: Yeah, it's south of Fresno. It was hot—this was in a fairgrounds, where the barracks were built over the stable, so the grass start coming up between the cracks of the floor. (Chuckles) Now, as I said, I was the first doctor. As soon as I got there, another doctor that came in was Dr. Hata. Remember Dr. Hata that came back? He was with the university football team, Hata. Anyway, he was the succeeding doctor. And as soon as I got there, or before I got there, they had a nurse and a lab technician go with me. The nurse was—what was the name?—became Takayesu, head of Castle, nurse at Castle Hospital. The other one was Fujii. And the two came with me to Tulare. The first thing, as you can imagine, when we examined the place, this was a barrack—real military barrack style. As we inspected the place, the toilet facilities were military style for men—it was all open. So, with the help of the girls, we got blankets to partition off the stalls.

MK: To give some privacy.

TW: Privacy, yeah.

MK: So, when you went there to set up, it wasn't just to set up a medical clinic, but overall?

TW: Yes, to oversee the place, right? So I had to check up on all those things.

MK: So toilet facilities, you had to check up on how that was gonna be.

TW: That's right.

MK: Living facilities . . .

TW: So everything. Now, one other thing was that after people came from that area—Santa Barbara, up north, San Luis Obispo—well, it so happened that one of my friends from here, my childhood friend, came in—Charlie Sakai. Now, when I saw him, he and his wife [Dorothy]—he had been married, working in Guadalupe as a farmer, and he came in. So I grabbed him and made him office manager, and to get the supplies and things like that for the hospital unit. And then, as the people came in, another person that came from Hawai'i was Steere Noda. You heard of that name, Steere Noda, Jr.? Now, he still lives here. He called me when Alice passed away. Now, the daughter is Lilianne Noda.

MK: So, Charlie Sakai turned up, Steere Noda, Jr. turned up there.

TW: And as I said, lot of these people came up, and being young, why, all these—what you call it—nurse's aides came around, and they were trying to get me interested in some of these girls. Now, Steere, as I left, I told Steere, "You take care of my girls, now." And sure enough, he took care of one of the girls—he married Katsy. Now Katsy is Steere's wife, mother of Lilianne.

WN: Wow. So, when you were at Tulare, were you like one of the really early arrivals?

TW: Well, I was the first arrival.

WN: You were the first to the camp?

TW: As I said, I had to set up the place.

WN: Right. And it was already existing facilities—they weren't building new facilities?

TW: No, they were all barracks. They were all put together on this—what do you call it—fairgrounds. They had these all ready.

MK: And when you went there to help, to set everything up, who was supervising you and telling you what had to be done?

TW: No, nobody. Nobody. They just put me there to supervise that place.

MK: So, no *hakujin* [Caucasian] person telling you do this or that?

TW: No.

MK: Lot of responsibility for a young man.

TW: Yes it was. And there's a write-up. When these people came in, all these mothers came in with their private formulas for their babies and things like that. Now, when they came to camp, we couldn't have facilities to make formulas for each baby. So one of the things I started to do at that time was this SMA [simulated milk adapted] came up—Similac. Now, that came. But before then, we condoned off part of the room in the hospital to make this a sterile room so that the milk that we processed would be safe for the kids. Now, we used to have that. At one time, there was a write-up in one of these articles—it's in there—that they came and saw me in this sweaty room. They were, you know, impressed about what we were doing. But soon after that, this SMA came in, which made it much easier.

MK: So you were given this task to set up this facility.

TW: Right.

MK: And as people came in, you could recruit people to fill certain positions?

TW: Oh, yes. As I told you, I got my friend Charlie to be the office manager for the hospital unit. (Chuckles)

MK: And at the time you were setting it up, did you know how many people were going to be housed there?

TW: Yeah, well, these assembly centers were for five thousand people—men, women, and children—each assembly center. Strange enough, one of those—well, we call it "inmate"—was a young girl, Amy Hiratsuka came from the Santa Barbara area. Now, Amy Hiratsuka is part of our Church of Crossroads members—came here, married a Japanese boy, Mizuno. She goes by the name of Mizuno, now.

WN: Is she still alive?

TW: Oh, yes. In fact, she wants to come and see me, check up on how I'm doing.

MK: You know, you mentioned that Tulare was very hot.

TW: Oh, yes.

MK: Was it like a desert-type situation? What was it like?

TW: I don't know what time of the year that was—probably around. . . . Fortunately, I think it was kind of springtime—it wasn't that hot.

WN: About April—March, April '42.

TW: Yeah, something like that.

MK: And, like were there nearby cities or towns to Tulare? I don't know where this is.

TW: Well, I wouldn't. . . . *Chee,* I can't guess right now, approximately where it's located. But, yeah, it's in an isolated area near Fresno.

MK: And, you know, as you were getting this place set up, where did you requisition or get all the things that were necessary—all the supplies, everything?

TW: That's from the military supplies, mostly. Well, I guess the assembly center people got the food and everything else all stocked up.

MK: When you look back, what were the most difficult challenges for you in doing that task you were given?

TW: Well, everything was a challenge, because being a radiologist, I wasn't able to find out what things were or what things had to be done to oversee this medical unit or anything else like that. Because it wasn't only the medical aspect when I first went in. It was the whole camp situation. Like for instance, as we got in, we had to check up about the food supply and see what kind of foods they were having. One area would complain that these people had a lot of Japanese things, the other side would have all mostly Caucasian things, because these people came from Santa Barbara area. The cooks were probably cooks of Western families, and they knew how to, their preparations were Western. Because some people who came from places like Guadalupe, just farmers and things like that, theirs were mostly Japanese things. (Chuckles) So we had to find out about what was going on.

WN: So the food differed, depending on what part, what section?

TW: Depending on the cook, yeah.

WN: Depending on the cook?

TW: Depending on the cook, that's why. So I guess some of the people had a good time—they would go from one place to another, (WN chuckles) to check up on what was going on.

WN: So after you were responsible for helping to check on the toilet facilities and so on, were you able to just concentrate on the dispensary or the medical center?

TW: Yes. Hospital's our area.

WN: What was that like? What needed to be done to set up a hospital in Tulare?

TW: Tulare, well, one of the things, as I remember, was there was a case that came in from the outside, I mean, when they came in, that this girl was pregnant and it was due to incest or something. I said, "Well, that could be easily proven. We'll get an X-ray." You could tell, there's fetal parts or something else. So we took her to get an X-ray examination. Sure enough, it was just a cyst, ovarian cyst, not a fetus. So, that case came through all right. But right after that, they pulled me out.

They said, "We need you up in Tule Lake."

WN: So how long were you actually there in Tulare?

TW: Oh, I would say about a month or so.

WN: Oh, so they told you that you needed to go to Tule Lake? Okay. Oh, three minutes.

I think we'll wrap up Tulare and we'll end today?

MK: You know, during the month that you were at Tulare as a doctor, were there any other cases that you were handling?

TW: Not too much, because as I said, Dr. Hata came in and most of the medical things were taken care by Dr. Hata.

MK: And when you were handling these things, you were employed by the relocation authority?

TW: Yeah, this is where I got my sixteen-dollars-a-month check.

WN: And this was the highest amount that they paid?

TW: That's the highest amount they pay. Of course, they supplied you with the clothing, jackets, and things.

MK: So everything was government-issue, then?

TW: That's right.

WN: And where did you live in Tulare? Were you in a regular barracks like everyone else?

TW: Yes, I think I was in a regular barracks.

MK: So they didn't have a separate living quarters for the medical . . . ?

TW: No, no.

WN: Okay, let's end here.

MK: And we'll continue.

TW: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape Nos. 55-35-3-10 and 55-36-3-10

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Tetsui Watanabe (TW)

Honolulu, Hawai‘i

March 30, 2010

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN) and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

WN: This is an interview with Dr. Tetsui Watanabe on March 30, 2010. The interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto.

Dr. Watanabe, we left off at your being transferred from Tulare to Tule Lake.

TW: Yes, okay.

WN: So, that's where we are right now. So today, we want to ask you about Tule Lake, and you said that you were in charge of setting up the medical facilities. . . ?

TW: No, I was the first one to be there, and Dr. [A.B.] Carson, I guess, was the one that was there to set up the medical facility.

WN: So you were the first at Tulare, and now you're the first at Tule Lake. . . ?

TW: Yes. I mean, as a refugee, you know, from camp. Yeah, first Japanese.

WN: Now, when you got to Tule Lake, was it like a brand-new, just-built facility?

TW: Yes, it was brand-new to accommodate about fifteen thousand people. Later on, they expanded to twenty thousand, when they moved some of the people from Manzanar and the other—like Arkansas people.

WN: And how did you feel about being told to move from Tulare to Tule Lake?

TW: Well, I had no choice because, I told you, I was still single and I was at the. . . . And as I said, I would cooperate with the authorities, so they felt I could be moved from Tulare to—being single and without any baggage, I guess, moved me right there.

MK: And who were some of the other early arrivals at Tule Lake?

TW: When I went there, some people from Oregon came down. One of them was a nurse—I think it was Kobayashi—and she was there to help the medical facilities. When we got there, as I said, with the influx of people coming from all over, I was kept busy running everything, setting up the place, greeting the new doctors coming in, so that I was working almost day and night. One of the funny stories is that this Kobayashi said, "You know, you need a haircut. Come on over. You

know, you haven't had a shave or a haircut for two or three weeks," so they corralled me in and gave me a haircut.

(Laughter)

WN: How come you never had a haircut?

TW: Well, I was working so hard. As I told you, I mean. . . . Then, see, the medical barracks was right in front of the administration building, and then the facilities was just being started. They had an X-ray room, and they were going to use that for the X-ray department. So as soon as the other Japanese doctors came, I left them and started for my X-ray department. One of the first things that I did was—you know, all these people that were coming in and were in the barracks, and they had this mess hall, and the cooks used to come from all over—so one of the first things, to be sure that they—any of these cooks—wouldn't spread any if they had tuberculosis, that kind of disease. So at that time, when the first X-ray unit came in, they didn't have enough film to come in. So what I used to do was to set up about ten minutes a day—I should say ten minutes a night, because it was dark—I used to fluoroscope all these at about ten-minutes interval. Then if I spotted anything suspicious, I would have them get X-ray film later on. So, I spent quite a lot of time doing that.

MK: Were there any incidents of TB at the time?

TW: Yes, I think there were. They had a unit—infectious unit—that isolated from the rest of the medical facility.

MK: And then besides looking for TB, were there any other specific diseases that you started trying to identify among the people coming in?

TW: Not at that time. Because, well, I guess one of the diseases that they were looking for was syphilis—you know, all contagious diseases like that. But we had no problem handling those, because it was out of our department, it was for the medical people to handle that.

MK: And, you know, you mentioned that there was sort of like a shortage of film. In terms of what you had for equipment, what was the state of the equipment that you were being given?

TW: Oh, it was good equipment that the army had stocked for their use. One of the things is that I had to have a staff—I had a secretary and a technician. This technician was a dental technician form Oregon, and he was very helpful in helping me. The other one was my secretary that they sent to me. And a strange coincidence, this secretary, later on, got married, and her son became my family doctor—Michael Ishioka.

MK: And were you able to get anybody you wanted, in terms of staff or help if you requested?

TW: Oh, yes, yes. We trained people to assist in the technical work—X-ray technicians. As I said, Mr. Morimoto was very helpful in helping training these people.

MK: And then you mentioned that after you arrived, more Japanese doctors arrived.

TW: Oh, yes.

MK: Now, tell us something about the background of these doctors that came in.

TW: Oh, they were very, in a way, outstanding doctors from the San Francisco area and up. Good surgeons, good obstetricians, good gynecologists. And one of those that came, finally, was this Dr. Togasaki, that we mentioned at the start. She was transferred to Tule Lake because she was too outspoken back down there, you know, in her ways. And so, they sent her over as a public health doctor. And at the same time, there was another Dr. Togasaki that came to us—that was the sister. Now, what was her name now? Yoshiye Togasaki was the public health doctor, and I can't think of the other doctor [Kazue Togasaki].

WN: This is the sister of Yoshiye Togasaki?

TW: Yeah, yeah.

WN: So there, you had two . . .

TW: Three sisters [Yoshiye, Kazue, and Teru] that were doctors. One of the Togasakis [Teru] came here to practice..

WN: Oh, in Hawai'i?

TW: Yeah, in Hawai'i. Mm-hmm.

WN: And this Yoshiye Togasaki, the public health doctor, this was the same Dr. Togasaki that you accompanied to Manzanar?

TW: That's right.

WN: I see.

MK: And you mentioned that she was a little outspoken, so she was sent over?

TW: Yes.

MK: Why do you say she was outspoken? What did she do?

TW: Well, I don't know. I guess she didn't get along with some of the doctors, the way they were doing things.

MK: And these doctors that came to Tule Lake, were they American-trained, Japan-trained?

TW: Mostly American-trained. Let's see, one was connected with Stanford, one was connected with University of California.

MK: And I don't know how much you can speak for them, but how did these doctors feel about their being, you know, sent to . . .

TW: They felt that they were doing their duty taking care of the Japanese people, and so they were, I guess, anxious to serve. One name that strikes me was Dr. [George] Hashiba, as I told you, that he had an American wife, and she came along. Another surgeon from Sacramento area, came. So, I mean, they were good specialists in their fields.

MK: Was there anything lacking, in terms of medical services, for the people at Tule Lake?

TW: No, I don't think there was. The only thing was, you see, what happened was, medical care was free. It was socialized medicine. People used to come even to have their in-grown toe nails cut. We finally had to weed them out, of course, and let the nurses or the nurses' aides take care of that. One of the doctors that came with that group was a Dr. [Masaharu Richard] Seto. Now, Dr. Seto, I thought, was a Hawaiian, care-free Hawaiian boy, because the first thing I saw him was playing an *'ukulele*. He was around, you know, in that area. I finally found out that his mother had a boarding house in Sacramento and used to have students going to Sacramento JC, and quite a number were Hawai'i boys. That's where he learned how to play the *'ukulele* and, in fact, speak pidgin English, too, in a way.

Maybe one of the humorous stories I have to tell you is that Sidney Kosasa was the pharmacist there. We thought that we'd have a *lū'au*. There was, as I said, a block way up on the outskirts called the "Aloha Block." These Aloha Block people were sent from San Pedro—they were stevedores and people who worked in the fishery thing, and they were sent over. I don't know how they got there, but they had their camp called "Aloha Block." And strange enough, one of the people that came into the camp was. . . . I can't think now. Anyway, he was a sociologist, and . . .

WN: Oh, Frank Miyamoto.

TW: Frank Miyamoto, he was a sociologist, and was sent to record or whatever was happening. The Japanese people thought he was an *inu,* a traitor, and they used to beat him up. So I went over to the Aloha barracks, and I said, "This is my friend. I've known him for a long time, and he's not a—" what you call— "a traitor. He's recording things for the history of the camp. And so, you people kind of take care and protect him." That's what happened.

Coming back to another incident about Sidney Kosasa, we were going to have a *lū'au*. All right. They had a pig farm out there, where the people used to go, and they had a nice pig ready for the *lū'au*. It seemed that nobody had the heart to chop the head off. So Sidney Kosasa had the bright idea, he would anesthetize (chuckles) the pig, so it won't squeal. So they put it in the *imu*. It came out, then when we had this *lū'au,* the first thing that they tasted was ether smell.

(Laughter)

You can imagine, you know, that was really a flop.

(Laughter)

But later on, they made up for it, and they got somebody to gather a pig and have a real *lū'au*.

WN: Wow, that's funny.

MK: You mentioned earlier that you knew Frank Miyamoto.

TW: Yes.

MK: How did you know him?

TW: Well, you see, when I was at the International House, he boarded at the International House. He was studying for his Ph.D. in sociology. That's where I met him.

MK: And because you were an acquaintance of his, a friend of his, were you ever at risk of being considered an *inu?*

TW: No, because I was working in a hospital at that time. Because as far as I'm concerned, I don't know whether they called me *inu* or not. I was too busy. I was outside of the population that were housed in the place.

WN: Now, Professor Miyamoto, was he actually assigned to Tule Lake, or did he sort of go in voluntarily to do research?

TW: I don't know whether. . . . I think he was assigned there.

WN: Because he was a professor at University of Washington.

TW: That's right.

MK: And so far, you've mentioned the stevedore people who were in Aloha Block; you've mentioned Sidney Kosasa. Were there any other Hawai'i-connected people in the camp that you recall?

TW: No, except, of course, my wife that came later.

WN: We'll get to that.

MK: Mm-hmm.

WN: Now, this Aloha Block, was it composed primarily of these stevedores who were from Hawai'i, but working in San Pedro?

TW: Yes. That's right.

WN: Do you remember any of their names?

TW: No, I don't.

MK: And how would you describe these Aloha Block people, what were they like?

TW: Oh, they were just Hawai'i people. They were happy-go-lucky, in a way. They used to entertain themselves. Yeah, I guess they probably learned how to make mash whiskey, and things like that.

(Laughter)

I mean, they had a good time, I think. Uh-huh.

WN: And these were Japanese Americans from Hawai'i?

TW: Oh, yes, uh-huh.

MK: And how much contact did you have with this Aloha Block?

TW: Not too much, because I was too busy in the hospital.

MK: And when you say that you were with the medical crew, working, in terms of living, where were you living?

TW: They had us assigned to Block Five, which was right across. . . . They had from the administration and the hospital unit, there was quite a space before the blocks started. I guess that

was for a fire corridor. So we were assigned to Block Five, which was, well, fairly close to the hospital, right next to the corridor.

WN: Would you say that those quarters were a little bit better than what the regular had?

TW: No, no. The quarters were the same. But, you know, these Japanese people, they were very handy with whatever they had, and they used to get lumber or something like that, they made porches and installed patios.

MK: And then in terms of services, say, for eating your meals, where were your meals taken?

TW: Usually in the hospital. But when we were out—for instance, in my case, my office hours, say, was from 8 [A.M.] to 4 [P.M.]—after 4, I would go back to the barracks. For the evening meals, we would go to the block mess hall.

MK: And how were the meals at your block's mess hall?

TW: Well, it was, I guess, satisfactory. (Chuckles) I wouldn't brag about it, but it was the ordinary mess, the meals that they prepared for the other people.

MK: And who did you generally eat your meals with, because you're a single guy, no family.

TW: That's right.

MK: Who did you kind of hang out with?

TW: Well, not too many people. But, like for instance, Sidney Kosasa, and this group from Sacramento was close by. I remember a dentist from Sacramento, who was a brother of a surgeon, lived right close by. And so, mostly Sacramento people were around there.

WN: You know, I was wondering, the hospital was primarily Japanese doctors?

TW: All.

WN: All Japanese doctors? I was just wondering, to what extent were all of these services, like the mess hall and so forth, run by Japanese?

TW: Oh, yes.

WN: So the mess hall, all the cooks were Japanese?

TW: Mm-hmm.

WN: What other facility, what about like fire, was there a fire department there?

TW: Oh, yes.

WN: Were they Japanese?

TW: Yes.

MK: And we know, like at Poston, they also had like a police department.

TW: Yes.

MK: How about at Tule Lake?

TW: Well, I guess they had that.

MK: And so at what point do you have a Caucasian supervisor or administrator over any service area?

TW: Well, the administration. The administrator was a Caucasian, and they had another assistant, probably Caucasian, too.

WN: What about the office help in the administration?

TW: Oh, they were part of the people in the camp.

WN: They were Japanese, too?

TW: Oh, yes.

WN: Interesting.

MK: So, in a way, the community in Tule Lake was basically Japanese-run.

(Noise in background.)

TW: Oh, yes.

MK: And then the administrators were Caucasian.

TW: Yes.

MK: And people also talk about the security, the guards. What are your remembrances of the guards at Tule Lake?

TW: Oh, not too much, because for one thing, there were internal guards. Don't forget, this was still army, isolated, and they had towers and everything manned by the military.

MK: So you have the military guards up in the towers, on the perimeter, and the . . .

TW: Internal to take care of the internal security.

MK: And so, when you like mentioned that you asked people in Aloha Block to help out Frank Miyamoto from being beaten up, what kinds of incidents were there, in those days, of people being beaten up or conflicts?

TW: That, I don't remember because, as I told you, I was too busy in the hospital taking care of things.

WN: I wanted to ask you about the medical facilities. How easy or difficult was it to get what you wanted or what you needed? Was it pretty easy?

TW: Yes, it was fairly easy. Assuming the supplies came in, because they had, probably, difficulty getting these items into the camp from the outside.

WN: And were most of the equipment military-issue, used equipment?

TW: Yeah. I mean, they were, in a sense, military equipment, but these were all made by standard-equipment people.

WN: So do you remember getting brand-new things, too?

TW: Oh, yes. They were all brand-new.

MK: They were all brand-new.

TW: Yes.

MK: You know, I was kind of curious, I remember, when we interviewed Mrs. Watanabe, she recalled that there were some patients that had like emotional or mental problems—you know, being depressed—because of their incarceration. As a radiologist, what kind of illnesses or situations did you have to deal with?

TW: Well, I'm afraid I wasn't too good at that, because mine was mostly, well, in a way, technical field. Of course, when I saw some of these X-rays that had positive, I had to tell them that it would be better for them to be isolated, to keep from spreading to other people in the mess halls and things like that.

MK: So you dealt with TB patients. How about patients that had broken bones, or other things going wrong with them?

TW: Yes. I don't recollect, but one of the first cases I had was somebody that tripped on a bench, I guess, and came for an X-ray. He had a broken bone. But things, you know, as accidents and things do happen.

MK: But in terms of how the medical facility was run, was it more or less like what . . .

TW: Any hospital, yes. For instance, the doctors would refer patients to me for a stomach examination, or colon examination, chest X-ray examination, or for broken bones or possible fractures.

MK: Was there a prevalence of any one type of situation or other . . . ?

TW: That, I don't remember.

WN: Did people need an appointment to see you?

TW: In some cases, like for instance, scheduling for a stomach X-ray, they had to be scheduled without breakfast. Or for colon examination, they had to be cleaned out and things like that.

MK: You know, when you went to Tule Lake, you were still kind of a young doctor, yeah?

TW: Oh, yeah.

MK: Kind of young. How did you get along with the older ones there?

TW: Well, I suppose they thought I was kind of, well, you know, fresh in a way, because I was a specialist in my field and they knew that I knew what I was doing. So, in a way, in spite of telling them what to do or what not to do, they respected my judgment.

WN: And were there medical students who were going to school on the West Coast at Tule Lake, working in the hospital?

TW: Yes, there were four medical students, as I remember. (Noise in background.) One of the doctors was an obstetrician, and his younger brother was a student at Cal and he became a doctor, too. There was a Nishimoto, I think, yeah, Dr. Nishimoto who came. Oh, Dr. [Masamichi "Mac"] Suzuki and Dr. Nishimoto, after the war, they were taken to Japan to check up on the effects of the atomic bomb, and they came back. Dr. Nishimoto practiced here for a while as a pathologist. He was at Lē'ahi. Dr. Suzuki went back to Michigan and became a doctor there.

WN: Were these medical students considered doctors, or were they treated as doctors, or were they treated like little bit below?

TW: Just below. I mean, in the hierarchy, they were students, yet. After all, these doctors, as I said, were professors and things like that, and they were teaching these students, so.

MK: And then, you know, because many of these doctors were all ready established doctors in their communities, when they were taken out of their homes and offices and placed in the camps, they were kind of losing their homes, and their practices were interrupted at that point.

TW: That's right.

MK: I'm wondering, would you know how these doctors fared after the war?

TW: Not too much. But I know that a doctor went back to Sacramento to practice. Dr. [George] Hashiba went back to Stanford. I guess they were welcome to get back in their field.

MK: And then, while in camp, did they ever discuss how they felt about the situation?

TW: Well, there were some rivalry, because, like for instance, as I said, Dr. Hashiba was an outstanding doctor. Another doctor was considered very proficient. So, the two of them didn't get along together too well, in the sense that they thought that they were better or as good as the one.

MK: So there were some rivalries?

TW: Well, yeah, in a sense.

WN: I know you were really busy—you had a full-time job, in essence, in the camp. So I was just wondering, what did you do to relax?

TW: Well, for instance, we went to movies. They had movies, and just cost five cents or something like that. They had a little—what was it called?—shops, where you could browse around and buy things.

WN: And were the shops run by Japanese, too?

TW: Oh, yes, manned by the camp people.

MK: And how much were you being paid, those days?

TW: At that time, was still nineteen dollars was the top. That was raised from, you remember, sixteen dollars. (Chuckles)

WN: So as a doctor working full-time, financially, you were pretty good compared to the majority of the camp.

TW: Than the others, yeah.

MK: But in terms of spending, you could go to the shops . . .

TW: Shops.

MK: . . . you could go to the movie.

TW: Shops.

MK: Anything else?

WN: Did they have things like bowling alleys . . .

TW: No, no.

WN: . . . tennis courts?

TW: No, no. No luxury, either.

MK: Mm, nothing. How about opportunities to go outside of camp?

TW: Well, the farmers, they used to have a farm outside. A lot of these people were farmers, and they went out. The soil in that area was very rich, and as they said, they had the biggest *daikon* [turnips]. They used to send the *daikon* to the other camps—it was so good. Pumpkins, and they had the pig farms like that. So they went out—it was not in the camp, itself.

WN: And then this *daikon* was sent to other camps, but were they also used in the mess hall at Tule Lake?

TW: Oh, yes, whatever they needed. But the excess was sent to the other camps.

WN: And who ran these farms?

TW: Well, now that. . . .

WN: I was just wondering, sustainability. Let's change tapes.

MK: Okay.

END OF TAPE NO. 55-35-3-10

TAPE NO. 55-36-3-10

WN: Tape two, session three, with Tetsui Watanabe.

We were talking about the farm, and you said they grew *daikon,* and what else?

TW: Pumpkins. They used to have big cabbages. I suppose all kinds of vegetables, too—celery.

MK: And in terms of like your protein, what were you folks getting, in terms of protein, for the mess halls?

TW: Well, we had the pig farm. Cattle, I don't know, I don't remember.

MK: How about fish or fish products?

TW: That's something we rarely had, although that was supposed to be a lake, right? Maybe we did have fish around. (WN chuckles.)

MK: And then I was wondering, when you were there, did you ever have any visitors? Anybody come to see you for any reason?

TW: No, no.

MK: And then how about your communication with your family back home in Hawai'i? Letters?

TW: Yes, we were able to write letters. It was sent out. Of course, they were censored—a lot of it. Mostly, those coming in were censored.

MK: And at that time, what kind of communication did you get from your mother and father back in Hawai'i, or your brother?

TW: *Chee,* not too much, I don't think.

MK: So during that time, were you aware of what was happening with your family?

TW: Yes, I guess, in a way. For instance, we had to communicate and get our parents' and Alice's parents' okay our wedding or marriage—the letters came back and forth. So they had—what you call?—exchange between the two families.

WN: Can you tell us how you met Alice?

TW: Well, as I said, we had a nurse's mess hall in the hospital area. One of the times that I was there at the mess hall, now Sidney Kosasa was there, too. He was telling me that, "Oh, there's a nurse from Hawai'i I want you to meet." So that was the first time I met Alice. Then the second time, I think, was a birthday party for some one of us. He carved the little rifle, and he put it on the table and said, "Doc, you have to take care of this girl, or else."

(Laughter)

WN: (Claps hands.) Good sense of humor, yeah? And at that time, Sidney was dating his future wife, Minnie . . .

TW: Yes.

WN: . . . Ryugo?

TW: Yes, they were people from Sacramento, so they knew each other.

MK: And when Sidney and Minnie got married, were you there at their wedding?

TW: Oh, yes, that's where we cropped the picture. Remember I told you that they have sufficient funds or money, that the parents got a photographer into the camp to take the picture. We were in the pictures, so we cropped my face and Alice's face and put it together as our wedding picture.

MK: And I think I heard something about you helped with the wedding festivities for the Kosasas. You performed the *hula* or something?

TW: Oh, (chuckles) well, those are the days. I told you, in my college days, I used to do the *hula* because, well, I loved dancing—folk dancing—and *hula* was one of them. One of the times that I came back, I. . . . When was this now? Thirty. . . . The first time I came back was '39, just before the war started. And I went to a *hula kupuna,* and learned how to do my *hula*. So, this doorman, Milton I'i, he's one of those *hula* dancers. He's the son of Francis I'i.

WN: Oh, the doorman here?

TW: Yeah, so he's well off.

MK: And so, you learned to do the *hula* . . .

TW: And so, at the wedding, at the party, I did the *hula* for them.

MK: And then, going back to your own courtship, you met Alice, you met Alice again. In terms of dating within the camp, what did you folks do?

TW: As I said, one of the places we went to was the movies. We still remember Bing Crosby's *White Christmas* that came out just about that time. So that was kind of nostalgic to hear that song, because that was the time when it came out. For a nickel, I got that.

MK: (Chuckles) And you mentioned that you were communicating with your families about your getting married.

TW: Yes.

MK: You folks were asking for permission?

TW: Oh, well, of course.

(Laughter)

I had to get the consent of Alice's parents. Of course, my parents were, you know, very good to me, so they were all. . . . They thought that what I wanted was what I wanted. But Alice got her brother, Sam Oka, who wrote and said that it's fine. "We got together, we give you our consent."

MK: And so, you folks got married in December 1942.

TW: Yes, December, the third.

WN: What was your wedding like?

TW: *Chee,* I don't remember.

(Laughter)

WN: So you remember the Kosasa's wedding more?

TW: Yeah.

(Laughter)

Mine was not unusual. I remember only that I had, as best man, I had Frank Miyamoto. And Alice had one of the Kozono sisters, Dr. Kozono, yeah. And that's about it.

MK: You know, to get married in camp, did you have to go through a lot of paperwork or anything?

TW: You know, that's one thing. I thought that being married by a minister was sufficient, and that, you know, his document was my marriage certificate. But now, as Brent [TW's son] goes, "You're not officially married," (MK chuckles) "because your marriage thing didn't go to the county to be officially married." So he's getting all excited about that, Newell County.

WN: So then, what happened?

TW: What do you mean, what happened?

WN: (Chuckles) I mean, he's still not sure?

TW: Oh, well, really, I don't know what happened. You ask Brent.

MK: (Chuckles) Okay.

WN: So there's a chance that your marriage was not totally legal, or. . . ?

TW: Well, that's what I'm saying. It's not. But as far as I'm concerned, I was married by a minister and have his certificate, so. (Chuckles)

MK: By the way, who was that minister?

TW: The minister was [Daisaku Kitagawa], was an Episcopalian minister. He wrote a book, too, about his—what you call—experience at the camp and outside afterwards.

MK: By an Episcopalian minister, okay.

WN: Was Sidney Kosasa at your wedding?

TW: Oh, yes.

WN: Sure.

MK: You know, nowadays, in normal circumstances, we have like a little reception. In your circumstance, what did you folks do?

TW: No, as I said, I don't remember. I guess we did have a party, or something.

WN: And after you got married, did Alice move in to your quarters?

TW: Oh, yes. (Chuckles)

MK: So, being married, were the quarters any different, or was it just your regular quarters?

TW: Regular quarters, except, you know, I had one room by myself. Let's see, the barracks was made so that there were one single room on each end. Then they had three or four double rooms, roomed quarters. So the big families, with the double rooms, used to knock off the walls and get together.

MK: And after you folks were married, how did that affect your work situation?

TW: It didn't affect it at all.

WN: Okay, let's talk about the loyalty questionnaire that you—everyone had to fill out. And question numbers twenty-seven and twenty-eight. Do you remember?

TW: Yes, that I would—what was that now?

WN: Okay. Question twenty-seven was, "Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?"

TW: That's right.

WN: And then number twenty-eight was, "Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the U.S. and faithfully defend the U.S. from any or all attack, by foreign or domestic forces, and foreswear any form of allegiance to the Japanese emperor, to any other foreign government, power, or organization?"

TW: Yes, I said "Yes" to both.

WN: You said "Yes" to both.

TW: But the problem about the last sentence or two that came out, "I foreswear allegiance to . . .

WN: Japanese emperor.

TW . . . the Japanese emperor." Because a lot of people, they thought if they said "yes" to that, they would lose their ability to have dual citizenship. They still wanted to retain their Japanese citizenship, too.

WN: So when you were filling out these questionnaires out, were there a lot of discussion, or did you folks talk about these two questions?

TW: Well, I guess in the camp, there must have been quite a discussion. As far as I was concerned, there was no problem. I had no problem, because I had cut off my dual citizenship before I came, in Hawai'i. My father took me off from the *koseki* [family register in Japan], already.

MK: But because you were born in Japan, you were not considered American?

TW: That's right. But even at that, my father took me out.

WN: So you were a citizen of nothing?

TW: Nothing, at one time.

MK: Wow.

WN: Wow.

MK: So, if you had to fill out forms back then on your citizenship, what did you do?

TW: I don't know what.

MK: You know, why did your father remove your Japanese citizenship? This is prior to the war, yeah, he removed it?

TW: Yeah.

MK: Why did he do that?

TW: Well, he felt that we were going to America, so you have to be loyal to your new country.

MK: And yet, because you were of Japanese background, born in Japan, at least at that time, you couldn't become an American citizen.

TW: That's right.

MK: Your situation was very unique, then,

TW: Well, in a way, unique, yeah.

MK: When you traveled from, say, Hawai'i to the Mainland, were there any difficulties because of your situation?

TW: Not traveling, but as I said, about getting internships or getting placed into a hospital, they required citizenship and I couldn't get that. There were only a few of these other hospitals that would waiver that clause. So I couldn't get into any county hospital, for instance.

WN: So Prince Crossing Hospital was not a county hospital, the one in Joliet?

TW: Oh, St. Joseph Hospital.

WN: Oh, St. Joseph's, oh.

TW: St. Joseph Hospital in Joliet, that's a Catholic hospital.

WN: Okay. Prince Crossing was . . .

TW: Prince Crossing was the place where, after the war, Alice and I went there to take care of what they called the destitute children.

WN: Well, we'll get into that. But I wanted to ask about, do you remember people coming into the camp to recruit for the 442nd?

TW: No, I had no idea.

MK: I know that eventually, Mrs. Watanabe and yourself got out of camp under the sponsorship of a Dr. Hodges. Now, how did that come about?

TW: Well, remember Dr. Hodges was the professor of radiology at the University of Chicago, and he was very happy to sponsor me back to Chicago. But at that time, they were experimenting on the nuclear bomb. And so, Chicago was under army control, so he couldn't have me on the staff in Chicago. But he said, "Well, Alice could go, and you can help Alice in this Prince Crossing, [Home for Crippled and Destitute Children]," which was an affiliate of the University of Chicago.

WN: And so, to leave the camp, what did you need? Did you need a sponsor, and did you need a prospect of employment?

TW: Yeah.

WN: And did they have like a list of places that you could go and couldn't go?

TW: No, I don't know I remember that.

WN: As long as it wasn't California. . . .

TW: There were places that wouldn't accept, yeah, but I wouldn't know which one.

MK: You know, you folks made a choice to want to get out of camp, right?

TW: Oh, of course.

MK: Why is it that you wanted to make that choice and not just stay, just stay at Tule Lake?

TW: Well, it was for my future. I mean, if I stayed at the camp, I wouldn't know where they'll place me again. You know, in the camp situation, they can place you from one place to another. This way, I had the freedom to get out, to see where I can go.

MK: So more control over . . .

TW: That's right.

MK: . . . your own situation.

WN: So obviously, many of you left, but many stayed back. What was it like? Do you remember any kind of feelings or attachment toward the people who were . . .

TW: Going out, or staying? No, I don't think there were any at that time. But later on, because of the question, you know, the questionnaire, they had feelings. In fact, oh, they were very much against the administration, and the army had to come in and everything. They had riots. That was after I was gone.

MK: After you folks left, yeah? You know, I know that later on, when nisei men entered the military and they would be leaving camp, they would have like farewell parties. In your situation, when you and Alice were leaving camp, were there any farewell parties or things of that sort?

TW: Not that I remember. The only thing I remember was when I got out, we were routed on the train going to, I think it was Reno. Now, there's a scenic route there, I think they call it Snake River. When we first got out, there was a Chinese restaurant in Reno. I had Chinese food for the first time, and it was so good and everything else. But don't forget, it had onions and things. So on this scenic route, I was in the toilet all the time. I couldn't . . .

MK: Your allergy to onions did you in.

TW: Yeah. So anyway, we got into Denver and we stayed. . . . In Denver, this Dr. [Charlie] Yanaga was there with his wife [Clara], and I remember staying overnight or so before we caught the train to Chicago.

MK: And, you know, being a Japanese couple, traveling, were there any incidents or people . . .

TW: No.

MK: . . . looking at you in odd ways or anything like that?

TW: No, nothing at that time.

MK: And as you folks traveled, what did you folks take with you out of camp? What did you folks have?

TW: Oh, I don't know, whatever we could carry in our suitcases, I guess. We left all our camp-issues, like for instance, coats, and smocks, and things like that. We left that behind, of course.

WN: Blankets.

MK: So after you left Tule Lake, and you went to Denver, then you eventually got to Chicago, what happened then?

TW: Well, in Chicago, close to the university, we went and got an apartment. And, who should be there, but Dr. [Masaharu Richard] Seto. And now, he had married a—what's the name now, his wife [Hideko "Deki" Seto]—Deki Seto. And they were in an apartment there, so we got together. And, soon after that, of course, we found out that we couldn't stay there, we went to Queen's Crossing.

MK: And somewhere along the line, you were supposed to work as a junior instructor under Dr. Hodges. But that was not possible?

TW: At the University of Chicago, no. (Noise in background.) As I found out, it was under army control. So, he wrote a letter to his brother, Dr. Fred Hodges, who was also a radiologist, head of the department of radiology at the University of Michigan. So he says, "Maybe you could go there." When I went there, and this was where our first son was born—University of Michigan. But in Michigan, to be an instructor, we had to have approval of the navy department. Since I wasn't a citizen, I couldn't get any approval. So we stayed there about two months, two or three months. KC, our son, was born.

MK: You folks were sort of like gypsies, then, going from one place, thinking that you have a position, then being told by the military that you can't be there.

TW: That's right.

MK: Then you went to another place—you went to Ann Arbor—and again, after a while, told you you can't be there. And so, with a young child, KC, in your care, you folks ended up at Joliet?

TW: Yes.

MK: And what did you do there?

TW: Well, after—I don't know how I got in contact with the Silver Cross Hospital, which was another hospital across from the river in Joliet from St. Joseph Hospital. This was a private hospital, too. And I got, somehow, a word that they had a radiologist coming from Chicago to Silver Cross Hospital, and they wanted somebody more permanent. So when I applied at Silver Cross Hospital, they said, "You're welcome."

Now Dr. [William E.] Anspach, who was a radiologist that came from Chicago, was gracious enough to say, "Fine, you take over the radiology department at Silver Cross."

MK: And how did that work out for you?

TW: It worked out very well. And the funny thing is, one of the doctors who went to Silver Cross was Dr. Seto.

MK: (Chuckles) Again?

TW: Again. He was one of those. You see, Deki Seto was a social worker, and she was at a placement office in Chicago for all these kinds of people. So she found a place for her husband at Silver Cross Hospital. Now, the strange thing about this is Dr. Richard Noda came to Silver Cross Hospital, and he's the brother of Steere Noda. And I guess he passed away recently. But he married a nurse at Silver Cross Hospital.

MK: Was there something about the Silver Cross Hospital that made it willing to hire Japanese American doctors?

TW: I don't know, I don't especially know. But as I said, Deki Seto, who in placement, found the place that would accept the. . . . Oh, before that, they had Japanese intern doctor, Doctor [Kushi]—what's his name now? Tragedy occurred there, a doctor from Maui. Anyway, it so happened that the doctor was living in a trailer camp, and the father and mother were with him and the sister. And they had a tragedy there. The gas stove blew up, burned them up. So, he came back to Maui to practice.

MK: So this hospital already was familiar with Japanese American medical practitioners?

TW: With Japanese, yeah. I think he was the first one there. But then as I said, Dr. Seto came there, and then I got there, too. Then Dr. Noda came.

MK: And what was married life, family life, like for you over there?

TW: There, I was fortunate enough to find a place, a doctor from Frankfort, Illinois. Now, Frankfort, Illinois was a German town—German-oriented town—about twenty miles out of Joliet. And the doctor there was Dr. [Walter] Hedges, who was a surgeon, found me a place. I was living in Joliet in a studio apartment, and he said, "Oh, if you can come out to Frankfort, I'll find you a place." At that time, the technician at Silver Cross Hospital that became acquainted said, "Oh, you know, I have a Ford in—" was it Racine, Wisconsin, her hometown—"it's not doing anything. If you go there and pick that car up, you can have it." So I went there, picked the car up. So I commuted from Frankfort, Illinois, to Joliet.

Now, in Joliet, Carolyn was born at Silver Cross Hospital. As I told you, in Illinois at that time, they only had two colors—black or white—for the birth certificate. So Carolyn is considered "white." (MK chuckles). Anyway, that's enough on that situation.

But that Ford, we came back on that Ford to almost to California, coming home, because instead of practicing in Chicago or Joliet, where I had all the roots already, Alice wanted to come home. So I said, "Okay, we'll come home." So Alice took the children home first, the two children. Then she came back and drove this Ford car to LA. And, in one of the funny incidents that I told you, Dr. Harada went to Los Angeles to practice. Now, he had a daughter—I forgot what her name was—but when I went to, going back to see her—coming on the way home, I stopped in Los Angeles, and she needed a car. So I gave her the car, instead of bringing it home.

MK: The car had a lot of history.

TW: Yeah.

MK: Also, is that the car that you taught Mrs. Watanabe how to drive it?

TW: Yes, way out on the country road. (Chuckles) In Frankfort, you know, there was only one road that got out in the farming area. So I told her, "All you have to do is go on that road." That's how she learned how to drive.

MK: And that's standard?

TW: Yeah.

WN: What kind of Ford was it?

TW: It's a Roadster.

WN: Ford Roadster. You mean, with the open top?

TW: Yeah. You know, you can close it up.

MK: What was it like living in Frankfort?

TW: Oh, Frankfort was a real nice community. The people loved us. Alice got along very well with her neighbors. She learned how to make sauerkraut stepping on the bathtub in the cabbage, things like that. Yeah.

MK: But Mrs. Watanabe wanted to come home to Hawai'i?

TW: Yes.

WN: So you drove from Frankfort to LA?

TW: LA.

WN: And from LA, you came to Hawai'i in 1947?

TW: Forty-seven.

WN: Well, we're out of tape.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape Nos. 55-37-4-10 and 55-38-4-10

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Tetsui Watanabe (TW)

Honolulu, Hawai‘i

April 8, 2010

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN) and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto (MK)

MK: This is an interview with Dr. Tetsui Watanabe, session number four, on April 8, 2010, in Honolulu, O‘ahu, Hawai‘i, and the interviewers are Warren Nishimoto and Michi Kodama-Nishimoto.

And this will be sort of like our wrap-up session. We’re going to start from 1947, and move on up to the present. So Dr. Watanabe, we thank you for meeting with us, you know, today.

TW: Well, thank you for hearing me. (Chuckles)

MK: We’re learning a lot and we’re enjoying the sessions. But you returned to Hawai‘i in 1947.

TW: Yes.

MK: Why is it that that decision was made to return to the islands?

TW: Well, it was all due to Alice [TW’s wife]. Now, she wanted to come home. You know, I had a chance of practicing in Illinois in my field because I had a mentor that was fairly high up in radiology, and he was there at Silver Cross Hospital. But she wanted to come back. So she came back with the children first, then she came back to Joliet. So we came back. As I said, one of the things that we came back, I had this Ford car I had drove to Los Angeles. Instead of shipping the car back, I met the daughter of Dr. Harada, that was in Tule Lake. She was in Los Angeles, and they needed a car. So I gave it to them and came back without a car. But as soon as I got back home, what happened was, do you recollect the Charley Iwai Service Station on Beretania [Street] and Pensacola [Street]?

MK: Mm-hmm [yes].

TW: Now, he had a used car department. He said, “Well, I have just the right car for you. You can have it and pay it back when you can.” This was a red Ford convertible. My children still remember riding in the convertible, going to see the parades on Kapi‘olani Boulevard on that. Another one that helped me out at that time was [Yorio] Shigemura. He became the owner of the manufacturers of (eyeglass) lens. And, you know, he became quite well off later on.

WN: The eyeglass lens?

TW: Yeah. And about the same time, what happened was, when I came home, I had no idea where I was going to practice. And Dr. Fujii, Takeo Fujii, that’s where the Japanese eating-place

(Gyotaku) is? Anyway, upstairs, he had his office upstairs. And one that helped me out to get the X-ray equipment was Charles Warder. He was so kind to me—he put up money. He was (agent for) Picker manufacturer of X-ray equipment company. So he set me up, got the loans from the bank, and we put this X-ray outfit in the upstairs of Dr. Fujii. Now, right after that, as I told you, I tried to get into the hospitals here and the clinics here, but they only had a few radiologists that had control (of radiology in Hawai'i). Dr. [A.G.] Schnack at the [Alexander] Young Hotel Building said, "You go over to Japanese Hospital, and you can practice there." At that time, they told me, the Japanese Hospital gave me a contract, said they could pay me three hundred dollars a month. Well, that wasn't enough to (to support) my family.. So I refused that, and then as I said, I had this person, Charles Warder, set me up in Dr. Fujii's office.

Soon after that, I met up with a Dr. [Richard] Sakimoto. He said that, "You know, what I want to do is to set up a medical clinic." He had plans that they were going to build a clinic building. So, I said, "Well, I'll wait for that building to come up," and I set up plans for an X-ray office in the basement of that building. The architect of that building was Ken Onodera. You remember Ken Onodera, that I talked to you about? Now, he was the architect, so he drew out the plans for me at the basement for the X-ray equipment. So, when I got his equipment up at Dr. Fujii's place, I was waiting for the clinic to open. When the building was finished, I moved the equipment down to the Medical Arts Building [1010 S. King Street], so . . .

MK: This Medical Arts Building is the one that's near the [Blaisdell] Concert Hall and Thomas Square?

TW: That's right, that's why it's still standing. But when I went into that building, now Dr. Sakimoto changed his mind. It wasn't going to be a clinic—it was going to be open for other physicians, outside physicians. So, the concept of a clinic was disrupted at that time. But of course, doctors that came in, I had visions of doing, practicing X-ray work for the physicians that came in, so that kept me going.

MK: You know, when you mention Dr. Takeo Fujii . . .

TW: Yes.

MK: . . . I was wondering, what kind of practice did Dr. Fujii have?

TW: Dr. Fujii was a general practitioner. I still don't recollect why he wanted, or (why) he asked me to use his office. Now that, thinking back, one of the things was that Dr. Fujii had a property in the back of the building. In that building, strange to say, was this Dr. Seto, who had come back and practiced in the army, and he was stationed at Fort Armstrong. So he came back and stayed in the cottage back there. So probably, that was the reason why Dr. Seto had told Dr. Takeo Fujii what my plight was without any place.

WN: Was this the same Dr. Seto that you knew throughout . . . ?

TW: That's right. So he got into the army and was stationed at Fort Armstrong. And Deki Seto, his wife, was stationed at Queen's Hospital as a social service worker. So it's kind of, you know, a . . .

WN: Small world.

TW: . . . small world, in a way, with this Dr. Seto.

MK: You know, I also wanted to know, when you returned, like how many radiologists were there on O‘ahu?

TW: There were, I think, three. One at Queen’s Hospital, one at Young Building, and one other—I forgot what his name was—at Straub [Clinic]. There were three.

MK: And for Kuakini, did they have a radiologist on-staff already?

TW: Yeah, that’s Dr. Schnack, I told you, was servicing radiology, I mean X-rays, at Kuakini Hospital.

MK: So when you came back, it was kind of a difficult situation.

TW: Oh, it was a difficult situation. So in order to ends meet before the building was finished, what I had to do was, I did what they call itinerant practice—I flew to Wilcox Memorial on Kaua‘i, and then I flew to Hilo Memorial in [Hawai‘i] once a week. So I was gone, I think it was in the early week in Wilcox and the later part of the week in Hilo Memorial. So, I was, you know, doing that.

MK: And for young doctors like yourself starting up in a community, was it the usual case that you would have to kind of finance, you know, the opening of your office, in terms of finding people who would support you for equipment or space?

TW: Yes, well, that’s why I said, for space, I got Takeo Fujii’s upstairs. Then for financing equipment, this Mr. Warder financed me with the equipment. He even financed me in finding a rental for my home. After, when I came home, I stayed up with my folks in Koko Drive up there, and you can see that house from here, now. But anyway, stayed there for a while and (my youngest daughter) Kathy said (to me), “Don’t forget to tell them that you helped build the stone house across from you.” Working after work, I would come home and used to haul brick blocks to build this home that this neighbor was putting up. That stone building is still there.

MK: And so, it was across from your father’s home?

TW: Yes. You see, that Koko Drive house had a rental unit below from the main house, it was above the garage, and that is where I stayed in a kind of one-bedroom unit. I could see this person working, trying to build that house. So after work, I used to come home and help him.

MK: And then eventually, you moved into that house?

TW: I moved into that house, I think, just one month before they found me a place in the back of—what building was that now? Right in back of the church, Methodist church, or right next to the Methodist—they had an apartment over there (on Kīna‘u St.). So we moved into the second-floor apartment from the church.

WN: Which church is this?

TW: Methodist church.

WN: Near the Academy of Arts area.

TW: Yeah, in the back there.

WN: Oh, so right near Medical Arts, then.

TW: Yeah, it was close, so I could walk from, you know. So at that time, again, fortunately, my father's friend, (Akiyoshi) Hayashida, his wife was a nurse that graduated from Queen's. So what I did was, I asked her to help me out to start off the practice, and she became my office nurse. At the same time, I said, "You know, I want you to learn to be an X-ray technician. I'll train you." So I trained her to be my X-ray technician, as well as my secretary. So she got her degree or certificate to be a X-ray technician at the same time. So when the office at the Medical Arts was finished, she became my technician and secretary.

MK: You know, because Mrs. Watanabe was a nurse, was there any consideration given to Mrs. Watanabe working alongside of you?

TW: Yes, at that time. But you see, we had the two children, already. So it made it difficult for her to help me out and raise the children.

MK: And, you know, you mentioned that at that Medical Arts building, originally, Dr. Sakimoto envisioning a clinic setup, but it changed so that it would be individual physicians occupying spaces.

TW: That's right. Uh-huh.

MK: So, when that occurred and you had your space there, you had to depend mostly on referrals, rather than . . .

TW: That's right. All these doctors, yes. Uh-huh. So, there was, you know, little bit more than I had hoped for, because if it were a clinic, everything would come right down to me. But this way, I had to have referrals from other doctors.

MK: And, you know, you had mentioned that you had a nurse assistant, who was also your X-ray technician. Who else worked with you at your office?

TW: Well, then later on, I had to have another office help. Things getting busy, so one of the boys that I helped at Kuakini Hospital came and became one of my technicians. So, Mrs. Hayashida had to work only as a receptionist and a secretary. Then, we had to get another secretary.

MK: So your practice really grew?

TW: Yes, it grew pretty well. At the same time, when it got well enough, I asked Mrs. Hayashida to resign. I said, "You know, you've worked enough for me. What you should do is to spend time with your husband, traveling around." And so, they did. I don't think they regretted my decision for them to, for her to resign.

MK: And, you know, in those days, you go back to the '40s and '50s, what kinds of cases did you commonly have referred to you?

TW: Well, it's all mostly diagnostic, to show what disease or orthopedic type of referral they want. As I said, in a way, I proselytized people from Kuakini Hospital X-ray department. One of the girls that worked as the secretary in the X-ray department, I asked to help. Her name is Leatrice Fujii. She became my secretary.

MK: And, you know, another question I have about those early days is, sometimes when I've talked with old-time doctors, they talk about certain racial lines that were kind of drawn up, like Straub was primary Caucasian; Kuakini, Japanese. What was it like for you in those days, in terms of . . .

TW: Well, it was true, because most or all of my referrals were from Japanese doctors. I don't think there was any referrals from Chinese, except that later on, I had to substitute for some of these radiologists that were going on vacation. Since my practice was still small, I could help them. There was a Chinese doctor, and there was also other doctor—I can't think of his name, but he had his practice at Medical Group. And so, yes, you know, it became more racially diverse.

MK: How about in terms of the patients that were referred to you? Were they, as a consequence, Japanese, too?

TW: Oh, yes. As I said, it's mostly Japanese that came to my office.

MK: So they were mostly Japanese patients referred by Japanese doctors.

TW: That's right.

MK: Would you be able to pinpoint about when, maybe, there was a little more diversity among the patients or doctors?

TW: *Chee,* I don't think there's any time lapse about that, because it's still the same way. Now. . . .

MK: That's interesting.

WN: I was wondering, radiology has gone through so much changes today. I mean, I'm sure it's so different from when you first started.

TW: That's right.

WN: When you first started in radiology, what kinds of—besides broken bones and maybe TB chest X-rays—what kinds of diseases did radiology detect?

TW: Well, like for instance, we used to do stomach examination, colon examination, skull examination, things like that.

WN: So these are the pre-CAT scan, pre-MRI days, yeah?

TW: Oh, yes. And as I told you about the machinery that I finally installed was the new devices that my Dr. Hodges from the University of Chicago had manufactured or started, like the tilting machine. Instead of being flat all the time, you could tilt the machine now. Then instead of having to take the picture after, we got this device that you could push the film—we call it "cassette"—where the film holder could be right on this machine and you could take it while you're examining it.

MK: You know, earlier, you had mentioned that a large part of your work was diagnostic.

TW: Yes.

MK: Did it become more treatment-oriented?

TW: No, because my treatment was usually, well, it was (diagnostic) X-ray, but treatment was at the hospital, where they had equipment for treatment. I was allowed to go to the hospital for treatment, and that's where I got in contact with the X-ray department.

MK: And, then, you know, right when you were talking about all the different types of equipment that you had to acquire and use, compared to other types of practices, was the cost of developing practice way different?

TW: Oh, yes. Very, very high, you know, much more expensive to start a radiological practice than other practices, equipment-wise.

WN: And you didn't need to get bank financing, then?

TW: Yes, as I told you, Warder got me my financing.

WN: Oh, he got it for you, okay.

TW: Yes.

WN: But you didn't have to go directly to a bank?

TW: Well, I had to, but he had to co-sign it and everything. Finally, after a while, he had a place on Kīlauea Avenue, and he got enough loans for me to move from the two-story apartment to a house in Bingham Street. There, we got financing there, so that was across or kitty-corner from the Church of the Crossroads, which I attended. It was very. . . .

WN: Did you join the church first, or was it because you were there?

TW: No, no, no, I was a member of the church. One of the funny stories is that there was a big mansion across from that—I forgot what mansion they called it. But anyway, they moved the mansion from that hill slope on that side, right across, from one side to the other side, and I didn't know about it.

(Laughter)

I mean, you know, and there was a kind of ditch right in front of our place—swampland. And that place where the theater was, by that, there was a swampland.

WN: You mean Varsity Theater?

TW: Yeah, this side. They made a little culvert there so that the water would collect in that area. And that culvert there was a big banyan tree right in front of the (house) that we were living in. And I used to go to church, going from the cottage to the church, going over the cover. And one of the days that I went there, I fell down into the ditch and lost my watch. I remember that. So that was my time.

WN: Were there a lot of Chinese families living in that area?

TW: Oh, yeah.

WN: Why was that?

TW: Why, I don't know.

MK: So originally, you were living up at Koko Drive. Then you moved from one part of Koko Drive to across the street. Then you lived by the Medical Arts Building (on Kīnaʻu Street).

TW: Then the Bingham Street.

MK: Mm-hmm.

TW: Now, after Bingham Street, again, Mr. Warder comes in. He says, "You know, there's a place close by on Kīlauea Avenue, and you could try and move into that area." And so from Bingham Street (house), we moved to that Kīlauea Avenue over here.

WN: And when was this?

TW: I can't recollect [1957]. Kathy was born right after we moved to [Kīlauea Avenue] . . .

MK: Oh, okay, and we know that Kathy was born in 1958, so . . .

TW: So, that's about that time.

MK: And so, you know, you moved to different neighborhoods as your practice grew, and I know that your practice was at the Medical Arts Building. And, eventually, you moved to—did it move elsewhere?

TW: No.

MK: It stayed there?

TW: I stayed there. Oh, yes, I stayed there until I retired. The thing is, there was a radiologist that came back and was looking for a place. He was first at the Queen's Hospital as an assistant or help, but I told him that he could come over and help me out. Dr. [George] Takushi came and stayed with me, and he branched out and made a second office. I think it was the Mō'ili'ili Building? He had a second office there. Eventually, I was at the age that retirement was coming soon. At that time, I told Dr. Takushi that I'd sell the practice to him if he keeps me until my retirement age. So, instead of keeping me, he terminated my work there. But he let me stay there until I had enough months to get to my retirement. So I retired early at sixty-four, age sixty-four.

MK: You know, why was it that you were already looking towards retirement? You know, you hear of doctors continuing into their later years. In your situation. . . .

TW: Well, that's another thing about what I felt was that my family came first. I would rather spend time with my family. After all the hardships that I went through—you know, like for instance, like when I was an itinerant radiologist going from island to another, see, I couldn't be with them. So I felt that it was important that I stayed with my family.

MK: And at about the time that you retired, Mrs. Watanabe was . . .

TW: Yes, ready to go to work.

(Laughter)

Go back to school, I should say. So she, you know, I encouraged her to go back to school, yeah. So she had an opportunity to work as a nurse's substitute teacher, I guess, at Kapi'olani Community College. So her friends, or I should say my friends, too, was. . . . Anyway, she was happy that she could start at community college office right back of McKinley at that time, before the new campus was started. Then when the new campus started, she was the first one to get into the nurse's aide program.

MK: You know, nowadays, it's not so uncommon for husbands to be encouraging of their wives, you know, going back to school or starting careers. You folks were kind of early, doing that.

TW: Probably so, probably so.

MK: And what were your feelings back then about Mrs. Watanabe going back to school and going back to work?

TW: Well, I thought it was great. As I said, I had time with the family, and I helped her about her career.

MK: And, you know, I know that we are familiar with your children. We know Brent, and Roger, and Carolyn, and . . .

TW: Well, KC, the first one.

MK: I guess, Warren, you met KC. And I know that like during the Vietnam war, Brent became a conscientious objector.

TW: That's right.

MK: I've always been curious, like what were your feelings about that time and about Brent's actions?

TW: Well, I wasn't in favor, frankly. But he said, "Well, since I had experience as a nurse's aide" while he was going to school, that he would become a Red Cross. . . . I don't know what they call them.

WN: Orderly, or?

TW: Well, he was an orderly. So I said, "You could substitute that, that'd be fine." So that's what he did.

MK: And I know that Carolyn went off and joined the Peace Corps.

TW: Yes.

MK: What were your thoughts on that?

TW: Well, I thought that was very, very great. That's good.

WN: We can change tapes.

MK: Okay, why don't we change tapes?

END OF TAPE NO. 55-37-4-10

TAPE NO. 55-38-4-10

MK: This is tape two with Dr. Watanabe, and you were just sharing with us some of the experiences of your older son, KC. And in KC's case, in the 1960s, what did he do? Brent became a CO [Conscientious Objector].

TW: A CO. Now, KC went and served in the army [U.S. Army Reserve], but was not sent overseas. And, no, I don't remember now how he fared not going, but as I said, he was a Latter-Day Saint. So he was on a mission. So probably, they thought that he could work better going back as a mission worker.

MK: You know, you have several children. You've got Carolyn, KC, Brent, Roger, Kathy, and it was your choice to spend time with your children, take the time. I was wondering, you know, as you and Mrs. Watanabe were raising a family, what was your general philosophy?

TW: Well, as I had told the children, now lot of the other parents would push their children to go into certain lines of work. Of course, most of the other, well, people around me said, "Well, why don't you push your children to go into medicine or some other professional field?" My feeling was that my children should have the freedom to choose whatever they wanted to do, but do it well. So, that was my philosophy about their careers. I hope—and, well, they all took after their grandfather, I suppose. They all became teachers, in a way—they went into the education.

MK: And I was wondering, how come you came up with that kind of feeling, that kind of philosophy? Like you know others who kind of pushed their kids into certain areas. How come you didn't?

TW: Well, I guess it comes back when my parents told me that I could choose whatever I wanted, except you should go into a field where you could practice what you can do. Like for instance, since I was an alien, I couldn't go into certain fields because it required citizenship. So from that time on, they were happy to let me do whatever I wanted to do.

MK: And going back to your father, I know that we touched upon it a little bit last time, but how did your father fare during and after World War II?

TW: Well, as I told you about his treatment during the war, when he was called a traitor. They finally had to move out from the Japanese school, Kapahulu Japanese School area, to Koko Drive. But in the meantime, he was still on the faculty at the university, and so he retired from the university. When my mother died, we felt that he should be, you know, we should support him, but soon later he remarried to Carolyn Shindo. And so, we were happy for him that he found somebody that he could get along with.

MK: You know, you said some people in the Japanese community considered your father a traitor. Why do you think that was so? Why did people react that way to your dad?

TW: Well, in a way, I can't understand why, because the Japanese community was still. . . . This was a part of America, right? And when they said that they were Americans, and still call him a traitor because he thought he was doing, well, what the Americans would be doing. And as I told you, one of the first things he did was to knock my Japanese citizenship away, because he said, "You're in America, and you do what Americans here do."

MK: And I think you mentioned that—I can't remember if it was on or off tape—but your father was teaching Japanese to American military men.

TW: Yes.

MK: Those were kind of difficult times. War was a difficult time for your family.

TW: Oh, yes, especially for my parents. Very difficult.

WN: In essence, your parents, your father was, I guess, criticized for being too pro-American.

TW: That's right.

MK: Well, it just shows that families were touched by the war in just many different ways. Warren, do you have any questions?

WN: No.

MK: Maybe as a closing, we asked Mrs. Watanabe the same question. We asked her, "If you could leave a message or thought with your children, what would it be?"

TW: Well, I would tell them, again, that it's the family. Be kind to each other, be helpful to each other, and, well, as a unit, we should stick together.

WN: Well, you celebrated your ninetieth birthday six years ago, and Brent made a book—it's called *Tetsui Watanabe: The First Ninety Years*. So now, you're working on your second ninety years.

(Laughter)

WN: Thank you, very much.

MK: Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW

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